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The Englishman's Boy
A NOVEL IN THREE VOLUMES.

LETTERS AND JOURNALS
OF
LORD BYRON:
WITH
NOTICES OF HIS LIFE,
BY
THOMAS MOORE.

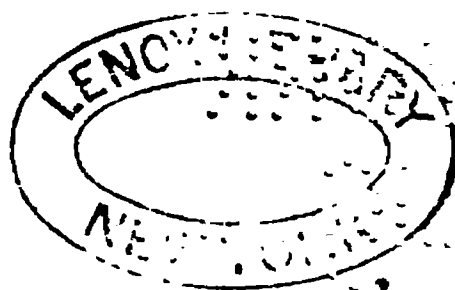
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DIRECTIONS FOR PLACING THE PLATES.

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NOTICES
OF THE
LIFE OF LORD BYRON.

‘ JOURNAL, 1814.

‘ *February* 18.

‘ BETTER than a month since I last journalized:—
‘ most of it out of London; and at Notts., but a busy
‘ one and a pleasant, at least three weeks of it. On
‘ my return, I find all the newspapers in hysterics*,
‘ and town in an uproar, on the avowal and republica-

* Immediately on the appearance of the *Corsair* (with those obnoxious verses, ‘ Weep, daughter of a royal line,’ appended to it), a series of attacks, not confined to Lord Byron himself, but aimed also at all those who had lately become his friends, was commenced in the *Courier* and *Morning Post*, and carried on through the greater part of the months of February and March. The point selected by these writers, as a ground of censure on the poet, was one which *now*, perhaps, even themselves would agree to class among his claims to praise,—namely, the atonement which he had endeavoured to make for the youthful violence of his *Satire* by a measure of justice, amiable even in its overflowings, to every one whom he conceived he had wronged.

Notwithstanding the careless tone in which, here and elsewhere, he speaks of these assaults, it is evident that they annoyed him;—an effect which, in reading them over now, we should be apt to wonder they could produce, did we not recollect the property which Dryden attributes to ‘ small wits,’ in common with certain other small animals:—

‘ We scarce could know they live, but that they *bite*.’

The following is a specimen of the terms in which these party scribes could then speak of one of the masters of English song:—‘ They might have slept in oblivion with Lord Carlile’s *Dramas* and Lord Byron’s *Poems*.’ —‘ Some certainly extol Lord Byron’s *Poem* much, but most of the best judges place his lordship rather low in the list of our minor poets.”

‘ tion of two stanzas on Princess Charlotte’s weeping
 ‘ at Regency’s speech to Lauderdale in 1812. They
 ‘ are daily at it still;—some of the abuse good, all of
 ‘ it hearty. They talk of a motion in our House upon
 ‘ it—be it so.

‘ Got up—redde the Morning Post, containing the
 ‘ battle of Buonaparte, the destruction of the Custom-
 ‘ house, and a paragraph on me as long as my pedi-
 ‘ gree, and vituperative, as usual.

‘ Hobhouse is returned to England. He is my best
 ‘ friend, the most lively, and a man of the most ster-
 ‘ ling talents extant.

‘ “The Corsair” has been conceived, written, pub-
 ‘ lished, &c. since I last took up this Journal. They
 ‘ tell me it has great success;—it was written *con*
 ‘ *amore*, and much from *existence*. Murray is satisfied
 ‘ with its progress; and if the public are equally so
 ‘ with the perusal, there’s an end of the matter.

‘ *Nine o’clock.*

‘ Been to Hanson’s on business. Saw Rogers, and
 ‘ had a note from Lady Melbourne, who says, it is said
 ‘ I am “much out of spirits.” I wonder if I really
 ‘ am or not? I have certainly enough of “that peril-
 ‘ ous stuff which weighs upon the heart,” and it is
 ‘ better they should believe it to be the result of these
 ‘ attacks than of the real cause; but—ay, ay, always
 ‘ *but*, to the end of the chapter.

‘ Hobhouse has told me ten thousand anecdotes of
 ‘ Napoleon, all good and true. My friend H. is the
 ‘ most entertaining of companions, and a fine fellow to
 ‘ boot.

‘ Redde a little—wrote notes and letters, and am
 ‘ alone, which, Locke says, is bad company. “Be not
 ‘ solitary, be not idle”—Um!—the idleness is trouble-

‘ some; but I can’t see so much to regret in the soli-
‘ tude. The more I see of men, the less I like them.
‘ If I could but say so of women too, all would be well.
‘ Why can’t I? I am now six-and-twenty; my passions
‘ have had enough to cool them; my affections more
‘ than enough to wither them,—and yet—and yet—
‘ always *yet* and *but*—“Excellent well, you are a
‘ fishmonger—get thee to a nunnery.” “They fool
‘ me to the top of my bent.”

‘ *Midnight.*

‘ Began a letter, which I threw into the fire.
‘ Redde—but to little purpose. Did not visit Hob-
‘ house, as I promised and ought. No matter, the loss
‘ is mine. Smoked cigars.

‘ Napoleon!—this week will decide his fate. All
‘ seems against him; but I believe and hope he will win
‘ —at least, beat back the Invaders. What right have
‘ we to prescribe sovereigns to France? Oh for a Re-
‘ public! “Brutus, thou sleepest.” Hobhouse abounds
‘ in continental anecdotes of this extraordinary man;
‘ all in favour of his intellect and courage, but against
‘ his *bonhomie*. No wonder;—how should he, who
‘ knows mankind well, do other than despise and
‘ abhor them.

‘ The greater the equality, the more impartially
‘ evil is distributed, and becomes lighter by the divi-
‘ sion among so many—therefore, a Republic!

‘ More notes from Mad. de * * unanswred—and
‘ so they shall remain. I admire her abilities, but
‘ really her society is overwhelming—an avalanche
‘ that buries one in glittering nonsense—all snow and
‘ sophistry.

‘ Shall I go to Mackintosh’s on Tuesday? um!—
‘ I did not go to Marquis Lansdowne’s, nor to Miss

‘ Berry’s, though both are pleasant. So is Sir James’s,
 ‘ —but I don’t know—I believe one is not the better
 ‘ for parties; at least, unless some *regnante* is there.

‘ I wonder how the deuce-any body could make
 ‘ such a world; for what purpose dandies, for instance,
 ‘ were ordained—and kings—and fellows of colleges—
 ‘ and women of “a certain age”—and many men of
 ‘ any age—and myself, most of all!

‘ Divesne prisco et natus ab Inacho,
 Nil interest, an pauper, et infimâ
 De gente, sub dio moreris,
 Victima nil miserantis Orci.

* * * *

Omnes eodem cogimur.’

‘ Is there anything beyond?—*who* knows? *He*
 ‘ that can’t tell. Who tells that there *is*? He who
 ‘ don’t know. And when shall he know? perhaps,
 ‘ when he don’t expect, and generally, when he don’t
 ‘ wish it. In this last respect, however, all are not
 ‘ alike: it depends a good deal upon education,—
 ‘ something upon nerves and habits—but most upon
 ‘ digestion.

‘ *Saturday, Feb. 19th.*

‘ Just returned from seeing Kean in Richard. By
 ‘ Jove, he is a soul! Life—nature—truth—without
 ‘ exaggeration or diminution. Kemble’s Hamlet is
 ‘ perfect;—but Hamlet is not Nature. Richard is a
 ‘ man; and Kean is Richard. Now to my own con-
 ‘ cerns.

‘ Went to Waite’s. Teeth all right and white;
 ‘ but he says that I grind them in my sleep and
 ‘ chip the edges. That same sleep is no friend of
 ‘ mine, though I court him sometimes for half the
 ‘ twenty-four.

‘ February 20th.

‘ Got up and tore out two leaves of this Journal—I
‘ don’t know why. Hodgson just called and gone.
‘ He has much *bonhomie* with his other good quali-
‘ ties, and more talent than he has yet had credit for
‘ beyond his circle.

‘ An invitation to dine at Holland-house to meet
‘ Kean. He is worth meeting; and I hope, by getting
‘ into good society, he will be prevented from falling
‘ like Cooke. He is greater now on the stage, and off
‘ he should never be less. There is a stupid and
‘ under-rating criticism upon him in one of the news-
‘ papers. I thought that, last night, though great, he
‘ rather under-acted more than the first time. This
‘ may be the effect of these cavils; but I hope he has
‘ more sense than to mind them. He cannot expect
‘ to maintain his present eminence, or to advance still
‘ higher, without the envy of his green-room fellows,
‘ and the nibbling of their admirers. But, if he don’t
‘ beat them all, why, then—merit hath no purchase
‘ in “these coster-monger days.”

‘ I wish that I had a talent for the drama; I would
‘ write a tragedy *now*. But no,—it is gone. Hodgson
‘ talks of one,—he will do it well;—and I think M—e
‘ should try. He has wonderful powers, and much
‘ variety; besides, he has lived and felt. To write so
‘ as to bring home to the heart, the heart must have
‘ been tried,—but, perhaps, ceased to be so. While
‘ you are under the influence of passions, you only
‘ feel, but cannot describe them,—any more than, when
‘ in action, you could turn round and tell the story to
‘ your next neighbour! When all is over,—all, all,
‘ and irrevocable,—trust to memory—she is then but
‘ too faithful.

‘ Went out, and answered some letters, yawned now

‘ and then, and redde the Robbers. Fine,—but Fiesco
 ‘ is better ; and Alfieri and Monti’s Aristodemo *best*.
 ‘ They are more equal than the Tedeschi dramatists. ’

‘ Answered—or, rather acknowledged—the receipt
 ‘ of young Reynolds’s Poem, *Safie*. The lad is clever,
 ‘ but much of his thoughts are borrowed,—*whence*, the
 ‘ Reviewers may find out. I hate discouraging a young
 ‘ one ; and I think,—though wild, and more oriental
 ‘ than he would be, had he seen the scenes where he
 ‘ has placed his tale,—that he has much talent, and,
 ‘ certainly, fire enough.

‘ Received a very singular epistle ; and the mode of
 ‘ its conveyance, through Lord H.’s hands, as curious
 ‘ as the letter itself. But it was gratifying and pretty.’

“ *Sunday, February 27th.*

‘ Here I am, alone, instead of dining at Lord H.’s,
 ‘ where I was asked,—but not inclined to go anywhere.
 ‘ Hobhouse says I am growing a *loup garou*,—a solitary
 ‘ hobgoblin. True ;—“ I am myself alone.” The last
 ‘ week has been passed in reading—seeing plays—now
 ‘ and then, visitors—sometimes yawning and some-
 ‘ times sighing, but no writing,—save of letters. If I
 ‘ could always read, I should never feel the want of
 ‘ society. Do I regret it ?—um !—“ Man delights not
 ‘ me,” and only one woman—at a time.

‘ There is something to me very softening in the
 ‘ presence of a woman,—some strange influence, even
 ‘ if one is not in love with them,—which I cannot at
 ‘ all account for, having no very high opinion of the
 ‘ sex. But yet,—I always feel in better humour with
 ‘ myself and every thing else, if there is a woman
 ‘ within ken. Even Mrs. Mule*, my fire-lighter,—

* This ancient housemaid, of whose gaunt and witch-like appearance it would be impossible to convey any idea but by the pencil, furnished one among the numerous instances of Lord Byron’s proneness to attach

‘ the most ancient and withered of her kind,—and
 ‘ (except to myself) not the best-tempered—always
 ‘ makes me laugh,—no difficult task when I am “i’ the
 ‘ vein.”

‘ Heigho! I would I were in mine island!—I am
 ‘ not well; and yet I look in good health. At times,
 ‘ I fear, “I am not in my perfect mind;”—and yet my
 ‘ heart and head have stood many a crash, and what
 ‘ should ail them now? They prey upon themselves,
 ‘ and I am sick—sick—“Prithee, undo this button—
 ‘ why should a cat, a rat, a dog, have life—and *thou*
 ‘ no life at all?” Six-and-twenty years, as they call
 ‘ them,—why, I might and should have been a Pasha
 ‘ by this time. “I ’gin to be a weary of the sun.”

‘ Buonaparte is not yet beaten; but has rebutted
 ‘ Blucher, and repiqued Swartzenburg. This it is to
 ‘ have a head. If he again wins, “Væ victis!”

‘ *Sunday, March 6th.*

‘ On Tuesday last dined with Rogers,—Madame
 ‘ de Staël, Mackintosh, Sheridan, Erskine, and Payne
 ‘ Knight, Lady Donegall and Miss R. there. Sheridan

himself to anything, however homely, that had once inlisted his good-nature in its behalf, and become associated with his thoughts. He first found this old woman at his lodgings in Bennet-street, where, for a whole season, she was the perpetual scarecrow of his visitors. When, next year, he took chambers in Albany, one of the great advantages which his friends looked to in the change was, that they should get rid of this phantom. But, no,—there she was again—he had actually brought her with him from Bennet-street. The following year saw him married, and, with a regular establishment of servants, in Piccadilly; and here,—as Mrs. Mule had not made her appearance to any of the visitors,—it was concluded, rashly, that the witch had vanished. One of those friends, however, who had most fondly indulged in this persuasion, happening to call one day when all the male part of the establishment were abroad, saw, to his dismay, the door opened by the same grim personage improved considerably in point of habiliments since he last saw her, and keeping pace with the increased scale of her master’s household, as a new peruke, and other symptoms of promotion, testified. When asked ‘how he came to carry this old woman about with him from place to place,’ Lord Byron’s only answer was, ‘The poor old devil was so kind to me.’

‘ told a very good story of himself and Madame de
‘ Recamier’s handkerchief; Erskine a few stories of
‘ himself only. *She* is going to write a big book about
‘ England, she says;—I believe her. Asked by her
‘ how I liked Miss * *’s thing, called * *, and answered
‘ (very sincerely) that I thought it very bad for *her*,
‘ and worse than any of the others. Afterwards
‘ thought it possible Lady Donegall, being Irish, might
‘ be a Patroness of * *, and was rather sorry for my
‘ opinion, as I hate putting people into fusses, either
‘ with themselves, or their favourites; it looks as if
‘ one did it on purpose. The party went off very well,
‘ and the fish was very much to my gusto. But we
‘ got up too soon after the women; and Mrs. Corinne
‘ always lingers so long after dinner, that we wish
‘ her in—the drawing-room.

‘ To-day C. called, and while sitting here, in came
‘ Merivale. During our colloquy, C. (ignorant that
‘ M. was the writer) abused the “mawkishness of the
‘ Quarterly Review of Grimm’s Correspondence.” I
‘ (knowing the secret) changed the conversation as
‘ soon as I could; and C. went away, quite convinced
‘ of having made the most favourable impression on
‘ his new acquaintance. Merivale is luckily a very
‘ good-natured fellow, or, God he knows what might
‘ have been engendered from such a malaprop. I did
‘ not look at him while this was going on, but I felt
‘ like a coal,—for I like Merivale, as well as the article
‘ in question.

‘ Asked to Lady Keith’s to-morrow evening—I think
‘ I will go; but it is the first party invitation I have
‘ accepted this “season,” as the learned Fletcher called
‘ it, when that youngest brat of Lady * *’s cut my eye
‘ and cheek open with a misdirected pebble—“Never

‘ mind, my Lord, the scar will be gone before the
‘ *season* ;” as if one’s eye was of no importance in the
‘ mean time.

‘ Lord Erskine called, and gave me his famous
‘ pamphlet, with a marginal note and corrections in
‘ his handwriting. Sent it to be bound superbly, and
‘ shall treasure it.

‘ Sent my fine print of Napoleon to be framed. It
‘ *is* framed ; and the Emperor becomes his robes as if
‘ he had been hatched in them.

“ *March 7th.*

‘ Rose at seven—ready by half-past eight—went to
‘ Mr. Hanson’s, Berkeley-square—went to church with
‘ his eldest daughter, Mary Anne (a good girl), and
‘ gave her away to the Earl of Portsmouth. Saw her
‘ fairly a Countess—congratulated the family and
‘ groom (bride)—drank a bumper of wine (wholesome
‘ sherris) to their felicity, and all that,—and came
‘ home. Asked to stay to dinner, but could not. At
‘ three sat to Phillips for faces. Called on Lady M.—
‘ I like her so well, that I always stay too long.
‘ (Mem. to mend of that.)

‘ Passed the evening with Hobhouse, who has begun
‘ a Poem, which promises highly ;—wish he would go
‘ on with it. Heard some curious extracts from a life
‘ of Morosini, the blundering Venetian, who blew up
‘ the Acropolis at Athens with a bomb, and be d—d
‘ to him ! Waxed sleepy—just come home—must go
‘ to bed, and am engaged to meet Sheridan to-morrow
‘ at Rogers’s.

‘ Queer ceremony that same of marriage—saw many
‘ abroad, Greek and Catholic—one, at *home*, many
‘ years ago. There be some strange phrases in the
‘ prologue (the exhortation), which made me turn

‘ away, not to laugh in the face of the surpliceman.
 ‘ Made one blunder, when I joined the hands of the
 ‘ happy—rammed their left-hands, by mistake, into
 ‘ one another. Corrected it—bustled back to the
 ‘ altar-rail, and said “Amen.” Portsmouth responded
 ‘ as if he had got the whole by heart; and, if any-
 ‘ thing, was rather before the priest. It is now mid-
 ‘ night, and * * *

‘ *March 10th, Thor’s Day.*

‘ On Tuesday dined with Rogers,—Mackintosh;
 ‘ Sheridan, Sharpe,—much talk, and good,—all, ex-
 ‘ cept my own little prattlement. Much of old times
 ‘ —Horne Tooke—the Trials—evidence of Sheridan,
 ‘ and anecdotes of those times, when *I*, alas! was an
 ‘ infant. If I had been a man, I would have made an
 ‘ English Lord Edward Fitzgerald.

‘ Set down Sheridan at Brookes’s,—where, by-the-
 ‘ bye, he could not have well set down himself, as he
 ‘ and I were the only drinkers. Sherry means to stand
 ‘ for Westminster, as Cochrane (the stock-jobbing
 ‘ hoaxer) must vacate. Brougham is a candidate. I
 ‘ fear for poor dear Sherry. Both have talents of the
 ‘ highest order, but the youngster has *yet* a character.
 ‘ We shall see, if he lives to Sherry’s age, how he will
 ‘ pass over the red-hot ploughshares of public life. I
 ‘ don’t know why, but I hate to see the *old* ones lose;
 ‘ particularly Sheridan, notwithstanding all his *mé-
 ‘ chanceté*.

‘ Received many, and the kindest, thanks from Lady
 ‘ Portsmouth, *père* and *mère*, for my match-making.
 ‘ I don’t regret it, as she looks the countess well, and
 ‘ is a very good girl. It is odd how well she carries
 ‘ her new honours. She looks a different woman, and
 ‘ high-bred, too. I had no idea that I could make so
 ‘ good a peeress.

‘ Went to the play with Hobhouse. Mrs. Jordan
‘ superlative in *Hoyden*, and Jones well enough in
‘ *Foppington*. *What plays!* what wit!—*helas!* Con-
‘ greve and Vanbrugh are your only comedy. Our
‘ society is too insipid now for the like copy. Would
‘ *not* go to Lady Keith’s. Hobhouse thought it odd.
‘ I wonder *he* should like parties. If one is in love,
‘ and wants to break a commandment and covet any-
‘ thing that is there, they do very well. But to go
‘ out amongst the mere herd, without a motive, plea-
‘ sure, or pursuit—’sdeath! “I’ll none of it.” He
‘ told me an odd report,—that *I* am the actual Con-
‘ rad, the veritable Corsair, and that part of my travels
‘ are supposed to have passed in privacy. Um!—
‘ people sometimes hit near the truth; but never the
‘ whole truth. H. don’t know what I was about the
‘ year after he left the Levant; nor does any one—nor
‘ nor—nor—however, it is a lie—but, “I doubt the
‘ equivocation of the fiend that lies like truth!”

‘ I shall have letters of importance to-morrow.
‘ Which, * *, * *, or * *? heigho!—* * is in my
‘ heart, * * in my head, * * in my eye, and the *sin-*
‘ *gle* one, Heaven knows where. All write, and will
‘ be answered. “Since I have crept in favour with
‘ myself, I must maintain it;” but *I* never “mistook
‘ my person,” though I think others have.

‘ * * called to-day in great despair about his mis-
‘ tress, who has taken a freak of * * *. He began a
‘ letter to her, but was obliged to stop short—I finished
‘ it for him, and he copied and sent it. If *he* holds
‘ out and keeps to my instructions of affected indiffer-
‘ ence, she will lower her colours. If she don’t, he
‘ will, at least, get rid of her, and she don’t seem
‘ much worth keeping. But the poor lad is in love—

‘ if that is the case, she will win. When they once
‘ discover their power, *finita e la musica*.

‘ Sleepy, and must go to bed.

‘ *Tuesday, March 15th.*

‘ Dined yesterday with R., Mackintosh, and Sharpe.
‘ Sheridan could not come. Sharpe told several very
‘ amusing anecdotes of Henderson, the actor. Stayed
‘ till late, and came home, having drank so much *tea*,
‘ that I did not get to sleep till six this morning. R.
‘ says I am to be in *this* Quarterly—cut up, I presume,
‘ as they “hate us youth.” *N’importe*. As Sharpe
‘ was passing by the doors of some debating society
‘ (the Westminster Forum) in his way to dinner, he
‘ saw rubricked on the walls, *Scott’s* name and *mine*—
‘ “Which the best poet?” being the question of the
‘ evening; and I suppose all the Templars and *would*
‘ *bes* took our rhymes in vain, in the course of the
‘ controversy. Which had the greater show of hands,
‘ I neither know nor care; but I feel the coupling of
‘ the names as a compliment,—though I think Scott
‘ deserves better company.’

‘ W. W. called—Lord Erskine, Lord Holland, &c.
‘ &c. Wrote to * * the Corsair report. She says
‘ she don’t wonder, since “Conrad is so *like*.” It is
‘ odd that one, who knows me so thoroughly, should
‘ tell me this to my face. However, if she don’t know,
‘ nobody can.

‘ Mackintosh is, it seems, the writer of the defensive
‘ letter in the Morning Chronicle. If so, it is very
‘ kind, and more than I did for myself.

‘ Told Murray to secure for me Bandello’s Italian
‘ Novels at the sale to-morrow. To me they will be
‘ *nuts*. Redde a satire on myself, called “Anti-Byron,”
‘ and told Murray to publish it if he liked. The

‘ object of the author is to prove me an Atheist and a
‘ systematic conspirator against law and government.
‘ Some of the verse is good ; the prose I don’t quite
‘ understand. He asserts that my “deleterious works”
‘ have had “an effect upon civil society, which re-
‘ quires, &c. &c. &c.” and his own poetry. It is a
‘ lengthy poem, and a long preface, with a harmonious
‘ title-page. Like the fly in the fable, I seem to have
‘ got upon a wheel which makes much dust; but, un-
‘ like the said fly, I do not take it all for my own
‘ raising.

‘ A letter from *Bella*, which I answered. I shall
‘ be in love with her again, if I don’t take care.

‘ I shall begin a more regular system of reading
‘ soon.

‘ *Thursday, March 17th.*

‘ I have been sparring with Jackson for exercise this
‘ morning; and mean to continue and renew my ac-
‘ quaintance with the muffles. My chest, and arms,
‘ and wind are in very good plight, and I am not in flesh.
‘ I used to be a hard hitter, and my arms are very long
‘ for my height (5 feet 8½ inches). At any rate, exer-
‘ cise is good, and this the severest of all; fencing
‘ and the broad-sword never fatigued me half so much.

‘ Redde the “Quarrels of Authors” (another sort of
‘ *sparring*)—a new work, by that most entertaining
‘ and researching writer, Israeli. They seem to be an
‘ irritable set, and I wish myself well out of it. “I’ll
‘ not march through Coventry with them, that’s flat.”
‘ What the devil had I to do with scribbling? It is
‘ too late to inquire, and all regret is useless. But,
‘ an’ it were to do again,—I should write again, I
‘ suppose. Such is human nature, at least my share
‘ of it;—though I shall think better of myself, if I

‘ have sense to stop now. If I have a wife, and that
 ‘ wife has a son—by anybody—I will bring up mine
 ‘ heir in the most anti-poetical way—make him a
 ‘ lawyer, or a pirate, or—anything. But, if he writes
 ‘ too, I shall be sure he is none of mine, and cut him
 ‘ off with a Bank token. Must write a letter—three
 ‘ o’clock.

‘ *Sunday, March 20th.*

‘ I intended to go to Lady Hardwicke’s, but won’t.
 ‘ I always begin the day with a bias towards going to
 ‘ parties ; but, as the evening advances, my stimulus
 ‘ fails, and I hardly ever go out—and, when I do, al-
 ‘ ways regret it. This might have been a pleasant
 ‘ one ;—at least, the hostess is a very superior woman.
 ‘ Lady Lansdowne’s to-morrow—Lady Heathcote’s,
 ‘ Wednesday. Um !—I must spur myself into going
 ‘ to some of them, or it will look like rudeness, and it
 ‘ is better to do as other people do—confound them !

‘ Redde Machiavel, parts of Chardin, and Sismondi,
 ‘ and Bandello—by starts. Redde the Edinburgh,
 ‘ 44, just come out. In the beginning of the article
 ‘ on “Edgeworth’s Patronage,” I have gotten a high
 ‘ compliment, I perceive. Whether this is creditable
 ‘ to me, I know not ; but it does honour to the editor,
 ‘ because he once abused me. Many a man will re-
 ‘ tract praise ; none but a high-spirited mind will
 ‘ revoke its censure, or *can* praise the man it has once
 ‘ attacked. I have often, since my return to England,
 ‘ heard Jeffrey most highly commended by those who
 ‘ know him for things independent of his talents. I
 ‘ admire him for *this*—not because he has *praised me*
 ‘ (I have been so praised elsewhere and abused, alter-
 ‘ nately, that mere habit has rendered me as indifferent
 ‘ to both as a man at twenty-six can be to anything),

‘ but because he is, perhaps, the *only man* who, under
‘ the relations in which he and I stand, or stood, with
‘ regard to each other, would have had the liberality
‘ to act thus; none but a great soul dared hazard it.
‘ The height on which he stands has not made him
‘ giddy;—a little scribbler would have gone on cavil-
‘ ling to the end of the chapter. As to the justice of
‘ his panegyric, that is matter of taste. There are
‘ plenty to question it, and glad, too, of the oppor-
‘ tunity.

‘ Lord Erskine called to-day. He means to carry
‘ down his reflections on the war—or rather wars—to
‘ the present day. I trust that he will. Must send to
‘ Mr. Murray to get the binding of my copy of his
‘ pamphlet finished, as Lord E. has promised me to
‘ correct it, and add some marginal notes to it. Any-
‘ thing in his handwriting will be a treasure, which
‘ will gather compound interest from years. Erskine
‘ has high expectations of Mackintosh’s promised
‘ History. Undoubtedly it must be a classic, when
‘ finished.

‘ Sparred with Jackson again yesterday morning,
‘ and shall to-morrow. I feel all the better for it, in
‘ spirits, though my arms and shoulders are very stiff
‘ from it. Mem. to attend the pugilistic dinner—
‘ Marquess Huntley is in the chair.

‘ Lord Erskine thinks that ministers must be in peril
‘ of going out. So much the better for him. To me
‘ it is the same who are in or out;—we want some-
‘ thing more than a change of ministers, and some day
‘ we will have it.

‘ I remember*, in riding from Chrisso to Castri

* Part of this passage has been already extracted, but I have allowed it to remain here in its original position, on account of the singularly sudden manner in which it is introduced.

‘ (Delphos) along the sides of Parnassus, I saw six
 ‘ eagles in the air. It is uncommon to see so many
 ‘ together; and it was the number—not the species,
 ‘ which is common enough—that excited my atten-
 ‘ tion.

‘ The last bird I ever fired at was an *eaglet*, on the
 ‘ shore of the Gulf of Lepanto, near Vostitza. It was
 ‘ only wounded, and I tried to save it, the eye was so
 ‘ bright; but it pined, and died in a few days; and I
 ‘ never did since, and never will, attempt the death of
 ‘ another bird. I wonder what put these two things
 ‘ into my head just now? I have been reading Sis-
 ‘ mondi, and there is nothing there that could induce
 ‘ the recollection.

‘ I am mightily taken with Braccio di Montone,
 ‘ Giovanni Galeazzo, and Eccelino. But the last is
 ‘ *not* Bracciaferro (of the same name), Count of Ra-
 ‘ venna, whose history I want to trace. There is a
 ‘ fine engraving in Lavater, from a picture by Fuseli,
 ‘ of *that* Ezzelin, over the body of Meduna, punished
 ‘ by him for a *hitch* in her constancy during his absence
 ‘ in the Crusades. • He was right—but I want to know
 ‘ the story.

‘ *Tuesday, March 22d.*

‘ Last night, *party* at Lansdowne-house. To-night,
 ‘ *party* at Lady Charlotte Greville’s—deplorable waste
 ‘ of time, and something of temper. Nothing imparted
 ‘ —nothing acquired—talking without ideas—if any-
 ‘ thing like *thought* in my mind, it was not on the sub-
 ‘ jects on which we were gabbling. Heigho!—and in
 ‘ this way half London pass what is called life. To-
 ‘ morrow there is Lady Heathcote’s—shall I go? yes—
 ‘ to punish myself for not having a pursuit.

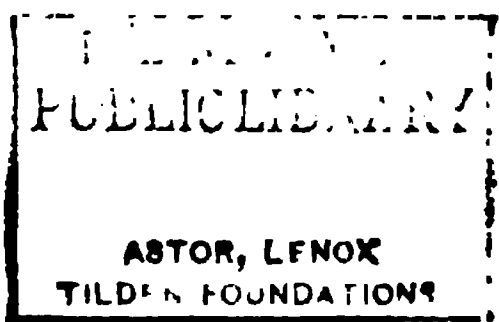
‘ Let me see—what did I see? The only person

Drawn by E. Spencefield from a Sketch by W. Page

Engraved by H. Jordan

PLATE 10

London: Published by J. B. Whittaker, 1841.



‘ who much struck me was Lady S * * d’s eldest daughter, Lady C. L. They say she is *not* pretty. I don’t know—every thing is pretty that pleases ; but there is an air of *soul* about her—and her colour changes—and there is that shyness of the antelope (which I delight in) in her manner so much, that I observed her more than I did any other woman in the rooms, and only looked at anything else when I thought she might perceive and feel embarrassed by my scrutiny. After all, there may be something of association in this. She is a friend of Augusta’s, and whatever she loves, I can’t help liking.

‘ Her mother, the marchioness, talked to me a little ; and I was twenty times on the point of asking her to introduce me to *sa fille*, but I stopped short. This comes of that affray with the Carlises.

‘ Earl Grey told me, laughingly, of a paragraph in the last *Moniteur*, which has stated, among other symptoms of rebellion, some particulars of the *sensation* occasioned in all our government gazettes by the “tear” lines,—*only* amplifying, in its re-statement, an epigram (by the by, no epigram except in the *Greek* acceptation of the word) into a *roman*. I wonder the Couriers, &c., &c., have not translated that part of the *Moniteur*, with additional comments.

‘ The Princess of Wales has requested Fuseli to paint from “The Corsair,”—leaving to him the choice of any passage for the subject: so Mr. Locke tells me. Tired, jaded, selfish, and supine—must go to bed.

‘ *Roman*, at least *Romance*, means a song sometimes, as in the Spanish. I suppose this is the *Moniteur*’s

‘ meaning, unless he has confused it with “ The Cor-
‘ sair.”

‘ *Albany, March 28.*

‘ This night got into my new apartments, rented of
‘ Lord Althorpe, on a lease of seven years. Spacious;
‘ and room for my books and sabres. *In the house,*
‘ too, another advantage. The last few days, or whole
‘ week, have been very abstemious, regular in exer-
‘ cise, and yet very *unwell*.

‘ Yesterday, dined *tête-à-tête* at the Cocoa with
‘ Scrope Davies—sat from six till midnight—drank
‘ between us one bottle of champagne and six of
‘ claret, neither of which wines ever affect me. Offered
‘ to take Scrope home in my carriage; but he was
‘ tipsy and pious, and I was obliged to leave him on
‘ his knees, praying to I know not what purpose or
‘ pagod. No headache, nor sickness, that night nor
‘ to-day. Got up, if anything, earlier than usual—
‘ sparred with Jackson *ad sudorem*, and have been
‘ much better in health than for many days. I have
‘ heard nothing more from Scrope. Yesterday paid
‘ him four thousand eight hundred pounds, a debt of
‘ some standing, and which I wished to have paid before.
‘ My mind is much relieved by the removal of that
‘ *debit*.

‘ Augusta wants me to make it up with Carlisle. I
‘ have refused *every* body else, but I can’t deny her
‘ anything;—so I must e’en do it, though I had as lief
‘ “ drink up Eisel—eat a crocodile.” Let me see—
‘ Ward, the Hollands, the Lambs, Rogers, &c. &c.—
‘ everybody, more or less, have been trying for the
‘ last two years to accommodate this *couplet* quarrel to
‘ no purpose. I shall laugh if Augusta succeeds.

‘ Redde a little of many things—shall get in all my

‘ books to-morrow. Luckily this room will hold
 ‘ them—with “ ample room and verge, &c. the charac-
 ‘ ters of hell to trace.” I must set about some em-
 ‘ ployment soon; my heart begins to eat *itself* again.

‘ *April 8th.*

‘ Out of town six days. On my return, find my
 ‘ poor little pagod, Napoleon, pushed off his pedes-
 ‘ tal;—the thieves are in Paris. It is his own fault.
 ‘ Like Milo, he would rend the oak*; but it closed
 ‘ again, wedged his hands, and now the beasts—lion,
 ‘ bear, down to the dirtiest jackall—may all tear him.
 ‘ That Muscovite winter *wedged* his arms;—ever since,
 ‘ he has fought with his feet and teeth. The last may
 ‘ still leave their marks; and “ I guess now ” (as the
 ‘ Yankies say) that he will yet play them a pass. He
 ‘ is in their rear—between them and their homes.
 ‘ Query—will they ever reach them?

‘ *Saturday, April 9th, 1814.*

‘ I mark this day !

‘ Napoleon Buonaparte has abdicated the throne of
 ‘ the world. “ Excellent well.” Methinks Sylla did
 ‘ better; for he revenged, and resigned in the height
 ‘ of his sway, red with the slaughter of his foes—the
 ‘ finest instance of glorious contempt of the rascals
 ‘ upon record. Dioclesian did well too—Amurath not
 ‘ amiss, had he become aught except a dervise—
 ‘ Charles the Fifth but so so—but Napoleon, worst of
 ‘ all. What! wait till they were in his capital, and
 ‘ then talk of his readiness to give up what is already
 ‘ gone!! “ What whining monk art thou—what holy
 ‘ cheat?” ’Sdeath!—Dionysius at Corinth was yet a
 ‘ king to this. The “ Isle of Elba ” to retire to!—

* He adopted this thought afterwards in his Ode to Napoleon, as well as most of the historical examples in the following paragraph.

‘ Well—if it had been Caprea, I should have mar-
 ‘ velled less. “ I see men’s minds are but a parcel of
 ‘ their fortunes.” I am utterly bewildered and con-
 ‘ founded.

‘ I don’t know—but I think *I*, even *I* (an insect
 ‘ compared with this creature), have set my life on
 ‘ casts not a millionth part of this man’s. But, after
 ‘ all, a crown may be not worth dying for. Yet, to
 ‘ outlive *Lodi* for this!!! Oh that Juvenal or Johnson
 ‘ could rise from the dead! “ Expende—quot libras
 ‘ in duce summo invenies?” I knew they were light in
 ‘ the balance of mortality; but I thought their living
 ‘ dust weighed more *carats*. Alas! this imperial dia-
 ‘ mond hath a flaw in it, and is now hardly fit to stick
 ‘ in a glazier’s pencil:—the pen of the historian won’t
 ‘ rate it worth a ducat.

‘ Psha! “ something too much of this.” But I
 ‘ won’t give him up even now; though all his admirers
 ‘ have, “ like the Thanes, fallen from him.”

‘ *April 10th.*

‘ I do not know that I am happiest when alone;
 ‘ but this I am sure of, that I never am long in the
 ‘ society even of *her* I love (God knows too well, and
 ‘ the Devil probably too), without a yearning for the
 ‘ company of my lamp and my utterly confused and
 ‘ tumbled-over library*. Even in the day, I send
 ‘ away my carriage oftener than I use or abuse it.
 ‘ *Per esempio*,—I have not stirred out of these rooms
 ‘ for these four days past: but I have sparred for
 ‘ exercise (windows open) with Jackson an hour daily,
 ‘ to attenuate and keep up the ethereal part of me.

* ‘ As much company,’ says Pope, ‘ as I have kept, and as much as I
 ‘ love it, I love reading better, and would rather be employed in reading
 ‘ than in the most agreeable conversation.’

‘ The more violent the fatigue, the better my spirits
 ‘ for the rest of the day ; and then, my evenings have
 ‘ that calm nothingness of languor, which I most de-
 ‘ light in. To-day I have boxed one hour—written
 ‘ an ode to Napoleon Buonaparte—copied it—eaten
 ‘ six biscuits—drunk four bottles of soda water—
 ‘ redde away the rest of my time—besides giving poor
 ‘ * * a world of advice about this mistress of his who
 ‘ is plaguing him into a phthisic and intolerable
 ‘ tediousness. I am a pretty fellow truly to lecture
 ‘ about “the sect.” No matter, my counsels are all
 ‘ thrown away.

‘ *April 19th, 1814.*

‘ There is ice at both poles, north and south—all
 ‘ extremes are the same—misery belongs to the highest
 ‘ and the lowest only,—to the emperor and the beg-
 ‘ gar, when unsixpenced and unthroned. There is, to
 ‘ be sure, a damned insipid medium—an equinoctial
 ‘ line—no one knows where, except upon maps and
 ‘ measurement.

“ And all our *yesterdays* have lighted fools
 The way to dusty death.”

‘ I will keep no further journal of that same hesternal
 ‘ torch-light ; and, to prevent me from returning, like
 ‘ a dog, to the vomit of memory, I tear out the remain-
 ‘ ing leaves of this volume, and write, in *Ipecacuanha*,
 ‘ —“that the Bourbons are restored !!!” “Hang up
 ‘ philosophy.” To be sure, I have long despised
 ‘ myself and man, but I never spat in the face of my
 ‘ species before—“O fool ! I shall go mad.”’

The perusal of this singular Journal having made the reader acquainted with the chief occurrences that marked the present period of his history—the publi-

cation of the Corsair, the attacks upon him in the newspapers, &c.—there only remains for me to add his correspondence at the same period, by which the moods and movements of his mind, during these events, will be still further illustrated.

TO MR. MURRAY.

'Sunday, Jan. 2, 1814.

*'Excuse this dirty paper—it is the penultimate
'half-sheet of a quire. Thanks for your book and the
'Ln. Chron., which I return. The Corsair is copied,
'and now at Lord Holland's; but I wish Mr. Gifford
'to have it to-night.*

*'Mr. Dallas is very perverse; so that I have offended
'both him and you, when I really meant to do good;
'at least to one, and certainly not to annoy either*.*

* He had made a present of the copyright of 'The Corsair' to Mr. Dallas, who thus describes the manner in which the gift was bestowed:—*'On the 28th of December, I called in the morning on Lord Byron, whom I found composing "The Corsair." He had been working upon it but a few days, and he read me the portion he had written. After some observations, he said, "I have a great mind—I will." He then added that he should finish it soon, and asked me to accept of the copyright. I was much surprised. He had, before he was aware of the value of his works, declared that he never would take money for them, and that I should have the whole advantage of all he wrote. This declaration became morally void when the question was about thousands, instead of a few hundreds; and I perfectly agree with the admired and admirable author of Waverley, that "the wise and good accept not gifts which are made in heat of blood, and which may be after repented of."—I felt this on the sale of "Childe Harold," and observed it to him. The copyright of "The Giaour" and "The Bride of Abydos" remained undisposed of, though the poems were selling rapidly, nor had I the slightest notion that he would ever again give me a copyright. But as he continued in the resolution of not appropriating the sale of his works to his own use, I did not scruple to accept that of "The Corsair," and I thanked him. He asked me to call and hear the portions read as he wrote them. I went every morning, and was astonished at the rapidity of his composition. He gave me the Poem complete on New-year's day, 1814, saying, that my acceptance of it gave him great pleasure, and that I was fully at liberty to publish it with any bookseller I pleased, independent of the profit.'*

Out of this last-mentioned permission arose the momentary embarrass-

‘ But I shall manage him, I hope.—I am pretty confident of the *Tale* itself ; but one cannot be sure. If I get it from Lord Holland, it shall be sent. Yours, &c.’

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘[Jan. 1814.]

‘ I will answer your letter this evening : in the meantime, it may be sufficient to say, that there was no intention on my part to annoy you, but merely to serve Dallas, and also to rescue myself from a possible imputation that I had other objects than fame in writing so frequently. Whenever I avail myself of any profit arising from my pen, depend upon it, it is not for my own convenience ; at least it never has been so, and I hope never will.

‘ P.S. I shall answer this evening, and will set all right about Dallas. I thank you for your expressions of personal regard, which I can assure you I do not lightly value.’

LETTER 155.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ January 6th, 1814.

‘ I have got a devil of a long story in the press, entitled “The Corsair,” in the regular heroic measure. It is a pirate’s isle, peopled with my own creatures, and you may easily suppose they do a world of mischief through the three Cantos. Now for your Dedication—if you will accept it. This is positively my last experiment on public *literary* opinion, till I turn my thirtieth year,—if so be I flourish until that downhill period. I have a confidence for

ment between the noble poet and his publisher, to which the above notes allude.

‘ you—a perplexing one to me, and, just at present,
 ‘ in a state of abeyance in itself.

‘ However, we shall see. In the mean time, you
 ‘ may amuse yourself with my suspense, and put all
 ‘ the justices of peace in requisition, in case I come
 ‘ into your county with “hackbut bent.”

‘ Seriously, whether I am to hear from her or him,
 ‘ it is a *pause*, which I shall fill up with as few thoughts
 ‘ of my own as I can borrow from other people. Any-
 ‘ thing is better than stagnation; and now, in the
 ‘ interregnum of my autumn and a strange summer
 ‘ adventure, which I don’t like to think of (I don’t
 ‘ mean * *’s, however, which is laughable only), the
 ‘ antithetical state of my lucubrations makes me alive,
 ‘ and Macbeth can “sleep no more:”—he was lucky
 ‘ in getting rid of the drowsy sensation of waking
 ‘ again.

‘ Pray write to me. I must send you a copy of the
 ‘ letter of Dedication. When do you come out? I
 ‘ am sure we don’t *clash* this time, for I am all at sea,
 ‘ and in action,—and a wife, and a mistress, &c. &c.

‘ Thomas, thou art a happy fellow; but if you wish
 ‘ us to be so, you must come up to town, as you did
 ‘ last year; and we shall have a world to say, and to
 ‘ see, and to hear. Let me hear from you.

‘ P.S. Of course you will keep my secret, and don’t
 ‘ even talk in your sleep of it. Happen what may,
 ‘ your Dedication is ensured, being already written;
 ‘ and I shall copy it out fair to-night, in case business
 ‘ or amusement—*Amant alterna Camænæ.*’

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ Jan. 7th, 1814.

‘ You don’t like the Dedication—very well; there

‘ is another: but you will send the other to Mr.
 ‘ Moore, that he may know I *had* written it. I send
 ‘ also mottoes for the Cantos. I think you will allow
 ‘ that an elephant may be more sagacious, but cannot
 ‘ be more docile.

‘ Yours,

‘ BN.

‘ The *name* is again altered to *Medora**.’

LETTER 156.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ January 8th, 1814.

‘ As it would not be fair to press you into a Dedi-
 ‘ cation, without previous notice, I send you *two*, and
 ‘ I will tell you *why two*. The first, Mr. M., who some-
 ‘ times takes upon him the critic (and I bear it from
 ‘ *astonishment*), says, may do you *harm*—God forbid!—
 ‘ this alone makes me listen to him. The fact is, he
 ‘ is a damned Tory, and has, I dare swear, something
 ‘ of *self*, which I cannot divine, at the bottom of his
 ‘ objection, as it is the allusion to Ireland to which he
 ‘ objects. But he be d—d—though a good fellow
 ‘ enough (your sinner would not be worth a d—n).

‘ Take your choice;—no one, save he and Mr.
 ‘ Dallas, has seen either, and D. is quite on my side,
 ‘ and for the first †. If I can but testify to you and the

* It had been at first Genevra,—not Francesca, as Mr. Dallas asserts.

† The first was, of course, the one that I preferred. The other ran as follows:—

‘ My dear Moore,

‘ January 7th, 1814.

‘ I had written to you a long letter of dedication, which I suppress,
 ‘ because, though it contained something relating to you which every
 ‘ one had been glad to hear, yet there was too much about politics, and
 ‘ poesy, and all things whatsoever, ending with that topic on which most
 ‘ men are fluent, and none very amusing—*one's self*. It might have
 ‘ been re-written—but to what purpose? My praise could add nothing
 ‘ to your well-earned and firmly-established fame; and with my most
 ‘ hearty admiration of your talents, and delight in your conversation, you
 ‘ are already acquainted. In availing myself of your friendly permission
 ‘ to inscribe this Poem to you, I can only wish the offering were as wor-
 ‘ thy your acceptance as your regard is dear to,

‘ Yours, most affectionately and faithfully,

‘ BYRON.’

‘ world how truly I admire and esteem you, I shall be
 ‘ quite satisfied. As to *prose*, I don’t know Addison’s
 ‘ from Johnson’s; but I will try to mend my cacology.
 ‘ Pray perpend, pronounce, and don’t be offended with
 ‘ either.

‘ My last epistle would probably put you in a fidget.
 ‘ But the devil, who *ought* to be civil on such occa-
 ‘ sions, proved so, and took my letter to the right place.

‘ Is it not odd?—the very fate I said she had escaped
 ‘ from * *, she has now undergone from the worthy * *.
 ‘ Like Mr. Fitzgerald, shall I not lay claim to the cha-
 ‘ racter of “Vates?”—as he did in the Morning Herald
 ‘ for prophesying the fall of Buonaparte,—who, by
 ‘ the by, I don’t think is yet fallen. I wish he would
 ‘ rally and route your legitimate sovereigns, having a
 ‘ mortal hate to all royal entails.—But I am scrawling
 ‘ a treatise. Good night. Ever, &c.’

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *January 11th, 1814.*

‘ Correct this proof by Mr. Gifford’s (and from the
 ‘ MSS.), particularly as to the *pointing*. I have added
 ‘ a section for *Gulnare*, to fill up the parting, and dis-
 ‘ miss her more ceremoniously. If Mr. Gifford or you
 ‘ dislike, ’tis but a *sponge* and another midnight better
 ‘ employed than in yawning over Miss * *; who, by
 ‘ the by, may soon return the compliment.

‘ *Wednesday or Thursday.*

‘ P.S. I have redde * *. It is full of praises of
 ‘ Lord Ellenborough!!! (from which I infer near and
 ‘ dear relations at the bar), and * * * *.

‘ I do not love Madame de Staël, but, depend upon
 ‘ it, she beats all your natives hollow as an authoress,
 ‘ in my opinion; and I would not say this if I could
 ‘ help it.

‘ P.S. Pray report my best acknowledgments to
 ‘ Mr. Gifford in any words that may best express how
 ‘ truly his kindness obliges me. I won’t bore him with
 ‘ lip thanks or notes.’

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ January 13th, 1814.

‘ I have but a moment to write, but all is as it
 ‘ should be. I have said really far short of my opi-
 ‘ nion, but if you think enough, I am content. Will
 ‘ you return the proof by the post, as I leave town on
 ‘ Sunday, and have no other corrected copy. I put
 ‘ “servant,” as being less familiar before the public;
 ‘ because I don’t like presuming upon our friendship
 ‘ to infringe upon forms. As to the other *word*, you
 ‘ may be sure it is one I cannot hear or repeat too often.

‘ I write in an agony of haste and confusion.—Per-
 ‘ donate.’

LETTER 157.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ January 15th, 1814. ’

‘ Before any proof goes to Mr. Gifford, it may be
 ‘ as well to revise this, where there are *words omitted*,
 ‘ faults committed, and the devil knows what. As to
 ‘ the Dedication, I cut out the parenthesis of *Mr.**,
 ‘ but not another word shall move unless for a better.
 ‘ Mr. Moore has seen, and decidedly preferred the
 ‘ part your Tory bile sickens at. If every syllable were
 ‘ a rattle-snake, or every letter a pestilence, they
 ‘ should not be expunged. Let those who cannot
 ‘ swallow chew the expressions on Ireland; or should
 ‘ even Mr. Croker array himself in all his terrors
 ‘ against them, I care for none of you, except Gifford;

* He had, at first, after the words ‘ Scott alone,’ inserted, in a paren-
 thesis,—‘ He will excuse the *Mr.*—“we do not say *Mr. Cæsar.*”’

‘ and he won’t abuse me, except I deserve it—which
 ‘ will at least reconcile me to his justice. As to the
 ‘ poems in Hobhouse’s volume, the translation from
 ‘ the Romaic is well enough ; but the best of the other
 ‘ volume (of *mine*, I mean) have been already printed.
 ‘ But do as you please—only, as I shall be absent
 ‘ when you come out, *do, pray*, let Mr. *Dallas* and *you*
 ‘ have a care of the *press*. ‘ Yours, &c.’

TO MR. MURRAY.

[“ 1814, *January 16th.*]

‘ I do believe that the devil never created or per-
 ‘ verted such a fiend as the fool of a printer*. I am
 ‘ obliged to enclose you, *luckily* for me, this *second*
 ‘ proof, *corrected*, because there is an ingenuity in his
 ‘ blunders peculiar to himself. Let the press be
 ‘ guided by the present sheet. ‘ Yours, &c.
 ‘ *Burn the other.*

‘ Correct *this also* by the other in some things which
 ‘ I may have forgotten. There is one mistake he
 ‘ made, which, if it had stood, I would most cer-
 ‘ tainly have broken his neck.’

LETTER 158.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Newstead Abbey, January 22nd, 1814.*

‘ You will be glad to hear of my safe arrival
 ‘ here. The time of my return will depend upon the
 ‘ weather, which is so impracticable, that this letter
 ‘ has to advance through more snows than ever opposed

* The amusing rages into which he was thrown by the printer were vented not only in these notes, but frequently on the proof-sheets themselves. Thus, a passage in the Dedication having been printed ‘ the first of her bands in estimation,’ he writes in the margin, ‘ *bards*, not *bands*—was there ever such a stupid misprint?’ and, in correcting a line that had been curtailed of its due number of syllables, he says, ‘ *Do not omit words—it is quite enough to alter or mis-spell them.*’

‘ the Emperor’s retreat. The roads are impassable,
‘ and return impossible for the present; which I do
‘ not regret, as I am much at my ease, and *six-and-*
‘ *twenty* complete this day—a very pretty age, if it
‘ would always last. Our coals are excellent, our fire-
‘ places large, my cellar full, and my head empty;
‘ and I have not yet recovered my joy at leaving Lon-
‘ don. If any unexpected turn occurred with my
‘ purchasers, I believe I should hardly quit the place
‘ at all; but shut my door, and let my beard grow.

‘ I forgot to mention (and I hope it is unnecessary)
‘ that the lines beginning—*Remember him, &c.* must
‘ *not* appear with the *Corsair*. You may slip them in
‘ with the smaller pieces newly annexed to *Childe*
‘ *Harold*; but on *no* account permit them to be ap-
‘ pended to the *Corsair*. Have the goodness to recol-
‘ lect this particularly.

‘ The books I have brought with me are a great
‘ consolation for the confinement, and I bought more
‘ as we came along. In short, I never consult the
‘ thermometer, and shall not put up prayers for a *thaw*,
‘ unless I thought it would sweep away the rascally
‘ invaders of France. Was ever such a thing as Blu-
‘ cher’s proclamation?

‘ Just before I left town, Kemble paid me the com-
‘ pliment of desiring me to write a *tragedy*; I wish I
‘ could, but I find my scribbling mood subsiding—not
‘ before it was time; but it is lucky to check it at all.
‘ If I lengthen my letter, you will think it is coming
‘ on again; so, good bye.

‘ Yours always,

‘ B.

‘ P.S. If you hear any news of battle or retreat on
‘ the part of the Allies (as they call them), pray send
‘ it. He has my best wishes to manure the fields of
‘ France with an *invading* army. I hate invaders of

‘all countries, and have no patience with the cowardly
 ‘cry of exultation over him, at whose name you all
 ‘turned whiter than the snow to which you are in-
 ‘debted for your triumphs.

‘I open my letter to thank you for yours just re-
 ‘ceived. The “Lines to a Lady Weeping” must go
 ‘with the Corsair. I care nothing for consequence, on
 ‘this point. My politics are to me like a young mis-
 ‘tress to an old man—the worse they grow, the fonder I
 ‘become of them. As Mr. Gifford likes the “Portu-
 ‘guese Translation*,” pray insert it as an addition to
 ‘the Corsair.

‘In all points of difference between Mr. Gifford and
 ‘Mr. Dallas, let the first keep his place; and in all
 ‘points of difference between Mr. Gifford and Mr.
 ‘Anybody-else, I shall abide by the former; if I am
 ‘wrong, I can’t help it. But I would rather not be
 ‘right with any other person. So there is an end of
 ‘that matter. After all the trouble he has taken about
 ‘me and mine, I should be very ungrateful to feel or
 ‘act otherwise. Besides, in point of judgment, he is
 ‘not to be lowered by a comparison. In *politics*, he
 ‘may be right too; but that with me is a *feeling*, and
 ‘I can’t *torify* my nature.’

LETTER 159.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘Newstead Abbey, February 4th, 1814.

‘I need not say that your obliging letter was very
 ‘welcome, and not the less so for being unexpected.

‘It doubtless gratifies me much that our *finale* has

* His translation of the pretty Portuguese song, ‘Tu mi chamas.’ He was tempted to try another version of this ingenious thought, which is perhaps, still more happy, and has never, I believe, appeared in print.

‘You call me still your *life*—ah! change the word—

‘Life is as transient as th’ inconstant’s sigh;

‘Say rather I’m your *soul*, more just that name,

‘For, like the soul, my love can never die.’

‘ pleased, and that the curtain drops gracefully*. *You*
‘ deserve it should, for your promptitude and good
‘ nature in arranging immediately with Mr. Dallas;
‘ and I can assure you that I esteem your entering so
‘ warmly into the subject, and writing to me so soon
‘ upon it, as a personal obligation. We shall now
‘ part, I hope, satisfied with each other. I *was* and
‘ *am* quite in earnest in my prefatory promise not
‘ to intrude any more; and this not from any affect-
‘ tation, but a thorough conviction that it is the best
‘ policy, and is at least respectful to my readers, as it
‘ shows that I would not willingly run the risk of for-
‘ feiting their favour in future. Besides, I have other
‘ views and objects, and think that I shall keep this
‘ resolution; for, since I left London, though shut up,
‘ *snow-bound, thaw-bound*, and tempted with all kinds
‘ of paper, the dirtiest of ink, and the bluntest of pens,
‘ I have not even been haunted by a wish to put them
‘ to their combined uses, except in letters of business.
‘ My rhyming propensity is quite gone, and I feel
‘ much as I did at Patras on recovering from my
‘ fever—weak, but in health, and only afraid of a
‘ relapse. I do most fervently hope I never shall.

‘ I see by the Morning Chronicle there hath been
‘ discussion in the *Courier*; and I read in the Morn-
‘ ing Post a wrathful letter about Mr. Moore, in which
‘ some Protestant Reader has made a sad confusion
‘ about *India* and Ireland.

‘ You are to do as you please about the smaller
‘ poems; but I think removing them *now* from the
‘ *Corsair* looks like *fear*; and if so, you must allow

* It will be recollected that he had announced the *Corsair* as ‘ the
‘ last production with which he should trespass on public patience for
‘ some years.’

‘ me not to be pleased. I should also suppose that,
‘ after the *fuss* of these newspaper esquires, they would
‘ materially assist the circulation of the Corsair; an
‘ object I should imagine at *present* of more importance
‘ to *yourself* than Childe Harold’s seventh appearance.
‘ Do as you like; but don’t allow the withdrawing that
‘ *poem* to draw any imputation of *dismay* upon me.

‘ Pray make my respects to Mr. Ward, whose praise
‘ I value most highly, as you well know; it is in the
‘ approbation of such men that fame becomes worth
‘ having. To Mr. Gifford I am always grateful, and
‘ surely not less so now than ever. And so good night
‘ to my authorship.

‘ I have been sauntering and dozing here very
‘ quietly, and not unhappily. You will be happy to
‘ hear that I have completely established my title-
‘ deeds as marketable, and that the purchaser has
‘ succumbed to the terms, and fulfils them, or is to
‘ fulfil them forthwith. He is now here, and we go
‘ on very amicably together—one in each *wing* of the
‘ Abbey. We set off on Sunday—I for town, he for
‘ Cheshire.

‘ Mrs. Leigh is with me—much pleased with the
‘ place, and less so with me for parting with it, to
‘ which not even the price can reconcile her. Your
‘ parcel has not yet arrived—at least the *Mags.* &c.;
‘ but I have received Childe Harold and the Corsair.

‘ I believe both are very correctly printed, which is
‘ a great satisfaction.

‘ I thank you for wishing me in town; but I think
‘ one’s success is most felt at a distance, and I enjoy
‘ my solitary self-importance in an agreeable sulky
‘ way of my own, upon the strength of your letter—for
‘ which I once more thank you, and am, very truly, &c.

‘ P.S. Don’t you think Buonaparte’s next *publication*
‘ will be rather expensive to the Allies? Perry’s Paris
‘ letter of yesterday looks very reviving. What a
‘ Hydra and Briareus it is! I wish they would
‘ pacify : there is no end to this campaigning.’

LETTER 160.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Newstead Abbey, February 5th, 1814.*

‘ I quite forgot, in my answer of yesterday, to
‘ mention that I have no means of ascertaining whe-
‘ ther the Newark *Pirate* has been doing what you
‘ say *. If so, he is a rascal, and a *shabby* rascal too ;
‘ and if his offence is punishable by law or pugilism,
‘ he shall be fined or buffeted. Do you try and dis-
‘ cover, and I will make some inquiry here. Per-
‘ haps some *other* in town may have gone on printing,
‘ and used the same deception.

‘ The *fac-simile* is omitted in Childe Harold, which
‘ is very awkward, as there is a *note* expressly on the
‘ subject. Pray *replace* it as *usual*.

‘ On second and third thoughts, the withdrawing the
‘ small poems from the Corsair (even to add to Childe
‘ Harold) looks like shrinking and shuffling, after the
‘ fuss made upon one of them by the Tories. Pray
‘ replace them in the Corsair’s appendix. I am sorry
‘ that Childe Harold requires some and such abetments
‘ to make him move off ; but, if you remember, I told
‘ you his popularity would not be permanent. It is
‘ very lucky for the author that he had made up his
‘ mind to a temporary reputation in time. The truth
‘ is, I do not think that any of the present day (and
‘ least of all, one who has not consulted the flattering
‘ side of human nature) have much to hope from

* Reprinting the ‘ Hours of Idleness.’

‘ posterity; and you may think it affectation very
‘ probably, but, to me, my present and past success
‘ has appeared very singular, since it was in the teeth
‘ of so many prejudices. I almost think people like
‘ to be contradicted. If Childe Harold flags, it will
‘ hardly be worth while to go on with the engravings :
‘ but do as you please ; I have done with the whole
‘ concern ; and the enclosed lines, written years ago,
‘ and copied from my skull-cap, are among the last
‘ with which you will be troubled. If you like,
‘ add them to Childe Harold, if only for the sake of
‘ another outcry. You received so long an answer
‘ yesterday, that I will not intrude on you further
‘ than to repeat myself,

‘ Yours, &c.

‘ P. S. Of course, in reprinting (if you have occa-
‘ sion), you will take great care to be correct. The
‘ present editions seem very much so, except in the
‘ last note of Childe Harold, where the word *responsible*
‘ occurs twice nearly together ; correct the second into
‘ *answerable*.’

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ Newark, February 6th, 1814.

‘ I am thus far on my way to town. Master
‘ Ridge * I have seen, and he owns to having *reprinted*
‘ some *sheets*, to make up a few complete remaining
‘ copies! I have now given him fair warning, and if he
‘ plays such tricks again, I must either get an injunc-
‘ tion, or call for an account of profits (as I never have
‘ parted with the copyright), or, in short, anything
‘ vexatious, to repay him in his own way. If the

* The printer at Newark.

‘ weather does not relapse, I hope to be in town in a
‘ day or two. Yours, &c.’

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ February 7th, 1814.

‘ I see all the papers in a sad commotion with
‘ those eight lines ; and the Morning Post, in particu-
‘ lar, has found out that I am a sort of Richard III.—
‘ deformed in mind and *body*. The *last* piece of in-
‘ formation is not very new to a man who passed five
‘ years at a public school.

‘ I am very sorry you cut out those lines for Childe
‘ Harold. Pray reinsert them in their old place in
‘ “The Corsair.” ’

LETTER 161.

TO MR. HODGSON.

‘ February 28th, 1814.

‘ There is a youngster, and a clever one, named
‘ Reynolds, who has just published a poem called
‘ “Safie,” published by Cawthorne. He is in the
‘ most natural and fearful apprehension of the Re-
‘ viewers ; and as you and I both know by experience
‘ the effect of such things upon a *young* mind, I wish
‘ *you* would take his production into dissection, and do
‘ it *gently*. I cannot, because it is inscribed to me ; but
‘ I assure you this is not my motive for wishing him
‘ to be tenderly entreated, but because I know the
‘ misery, at his time of life, of untoward remarks upon
‘ first appearance.

‘ Now for *self*. Pray thank your *cousin*—it is just
‘ as it should be, to my liking, and probably *more*
‘ than will suit any one else’s. I hope and trust that
‘ you are well and well doing. Peace be with you.
‘ Ever yours, my dear friend.’

LETTER 162.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ February 10th, 1814. ’

‘ I arrived in town late yesterday evening, having
 ‘ been absent three weeks, which I passed in Notts.
 ‘ quietly and pleasantly. You can have no conception
 ‘ of the uproar the eight lines on the little *Royalty’s*
 ‘ weeping in 1812 (now republished) have occasioned.
 ‘ The R * *, who had always thought them *yours*;
 ‘ chose—God knows why—on discovering them to be
 ‘ mine, to be *affected* “ in sorrow rather than anger.”
 ‘ The Morning Post, Sun, Herald, Courier, have all
 ‘ been in hysterics ever since. M. is in a fright, and
 ‘ wanted to shuffle; and the abuse against me in all
 ‘ directions is vehement, unceasing, loud—some of it
 ‘ good, and all of it hearty. I feel a little compunc-
 ‘ tious as to the R * *’s *regret*;—“ would he had been
 ‘ only angry! but I fear him not.”

‘ Some of these same assailments you have proba-
 ‘ bly seen. My person (which is excellent for “ the
 ‘ nonce ”) has been denounced in verses, the more
 ‘ like the subject, inasmuch as they halt exceedingly.
 ‘ Then, in another, I am an *atheist*, a *rebel*, and, at
 ‘ last, the *Devil* (*boiteux*, I presume). My demonism
 ‘ seems to be a female’s conjecture: if so, perhaps, I
 ‘ could convince her that I am but a mere mortal,—if
 ‘ a queen of the Amazons may be believed, who says
 ‘ *αριστον χωλος οϊφει*. I quote from memory, so my
 ‘ Greek is probably deficient; but the passage is
 ‘ *meant* to mean * *.

‘ Seriously, I am in, what the learned call, a
 ‘ dilemma, and the vulgar, a scrape; and my friends
 ‘ desire me not to be in a passion; and, like Sir Fret-
 ‘ ful, I assure them that I am “ quite calm,”—but I
 ‘ am nevertheless in a fury.

‘ Since I wrote thus far, a friend has come in, and
‘ we have been talking and buffooning, till I have quite
‘ lost the thread of my thoughts; and, as I won’t send
‘ them unstrung to you, good morning, and

‘ Believe me ever, &c. ’

‘ P.S. Murray, during my absence, *omitted* the
‘ Tears in several of the copies. I have made him
‘ replace them, and am very wroth with his qualms;—
‘ “as the wine is poured out, let it be drunk to the
‘ dregs.” ’

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ February 10th, 1814.

‘ I am much better, and indeed quite well this
‘ morning. I have received *two*, but I presume there
‘ are more of the *Ana*, subsequently, and also some-
‘ thing previous, to which the Morning Chronicle
‘ replied. You also mentioned a parody on the *Skull*.
‘ I wish to see them all, because there may be things
‘ that require notice either by pen or person.

‘ Yours, &c.

‘ You need not trouble yourself to answer this; but
‘ send me the things when you get them.’

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ February 12th, 1814.

‘ If you have copies of the “Intercepted Letters,”
‘ Lady Holland would be glad of a volume; and when
‘ you have served others, have the goodness to think
‘ of your humble servant.

‘ You have played the devil by that injudicious
‘ *suppression*, which you did totally without my con-
‘ sent. Some of the papers have exactly said what
‘ might be expected. Now I *do* not, and *will* not

‘ be supposed to shrink, although myself and every-
 ‘ thing belonging to me were to perish with my
 ‘ memory. Yours, &c. ‘ BN.

‘ P.S. Pray attend to what I stated yesterday on
 ‘ *technical* topics.’

LETTER 163.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Monday, February 14th, 1814.*

‘ Before I left town yesterday, I wrote you a note,
 ‘ which I presume you received. I have heard so
 ‘ many different accounts of *your* proceedings, or
 ‘ rather of those of others towards *you*, in conse-
 ‘ quence of the publication of these everlasting lines,
 ‘ that I am anxious to hear from yourself the real
 ‘ state of the case. Whatever responsibility, obloquy,
 ‘ or effect is to arise from the publication, should surely
 ‘ *not* fall upon you in any degree ; and I can have no
 ‘ objection to your stating, as distinctly and publicly
 ‘ as you please, *your* unwillingness to publish them,
 ‘ and my own obstinacy upon the subject. Take any
 ‘ course you please to vindicate *yourself*, but leave me
 ‘ to fight my own way ; and, as I before said, do not
 ‘ *compromise* me by anything which may look like
 ‘ *shrinking* on *my* part ; as for your own, make the
 ‘ best of it. Yours, ‘ BN.’

LETTER 164.

TO MR. ROGERS.

‘ *February 16th, 1814.*

‘ My dear Rogers,

‘ I wrote to Lord Holland briefly, but I hope dis-
 ‘ tinctly, on the subject which has lately occupied much
 ‘ of my conversation with him and you.* As things

* Relative to a proposed reconciliation between Lord Carlisle and himself.

‘ now stand, upon that topic my determination must
‘ be unalterable.

‘ I declare to you most sincerely that there is no
‘ human being on whose regard and esteem I set a
‘ higher value than on Lord Holland’s; and, as far as
‘ concerns himself, I would concede even to humilia-
‘ tion, without any view to the future, and solely from
‘ my sense of his conduct as to the past. For the
‘ rest, I conceive that I have already done all in my
‘ power by the suppression*. If that is not enough,
‘ they must act as they please; but I will not “ teach
‘ my tongue a most inherent baseness,” come what may.
‘ You will probably be at the Marquis Lansdowne’s
‘ to-night. I am asked, but I am not sure that I
‘ shall be able to go. Hobhouse will be there. I
‘ think, if you knew him well, you would like him.

‘ Believe me always yours very affectionately,
‘ B.’

LETTER 166.

TO MR. ROGERS.

‘ *February 16th, 1814.*

‘ If Lord Holland is satisfied, as far as regards him-
‘ self and Lady Hd., and as this letter expresses him
‘ to be, it is enough.

‘ As for any impression the public may receive from
‘ the revival of the lines on Lord Carlisle, let them
‘ keep it,—the more favourable for him, and the worse
‘ for me—better for all.

‘ All the sayings and doings in the world shall not
‘ make me utter another word of conciliation to any-
‘ thing that breathes. I shall bear what I can, and
‘ what I cannot I shall resist. The worst they could
‘ do would be to exclude me from society. I have

* Of the Satire.

‘ never courted it, nor, I may add, in the general
 ‘ sense of the word, enjoyed it—and “there is a world
 ‘ elsewhere!”

‘ Anything remarkably injurious, I have the same
 ‘ means of repaying as other men, with such interest
 ‘ as circumstances may annex to it.

‘ Nothing but the necessity of adhering to regimen
 ‘ prevents me from dining with you to-morrow.

‘ I am yours most truly,

‘ BN.’

LETTER 166.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ February 16th, 1814.

‘ You may be assured that the only prickles that
 ‘ sting from the Royal hedgehog are those which pos-
 ‘ sess a torpedo property, and may benumb some of my
 ‘ friends. *I* am quite silent, and “hush’d in grim
 ‘ repose.” The frequency of the assaults has weak-
 ‘ ened their effects,—if ever they had any;—and,
 ‘ if they had had much, I should hardly have held my
 ‘ tongue, or withheld my fingers. It is something
 ‘ quite new to attack a man for abandoning his resent-
 ‘ ments. I have heard that previous praise and sub-
 ‘ sequent vituperation were rather ungrateful, but I
 ‘ did not know that it was wrong to endeavour to do
 ‘ justice to those who did not wait till I had made
 ‘ some amends for former and boyish prejudices, but
 ‘ received me into their friendship, when I might still
 ‘ have been their enemy.

‘ You perceive justly that I must *intentionally* have
 ‘ made my fortune, like Sir Francis Wronghead. It
 ‘ were better if there were more merit in my independ-
 ‘ ence, but it really is something nowadays to be in-
 ‘ dependent at all, and the *less* temptation to be other-

‘ wise, the more uncommon the case, in these times of
‘ paradoxical servility. I believe that most of our
‘ hates and likings have been hitherto nearly the same;
‘ but from henceforth they must, of necessity, be one
‘ and indivisible,—and now for it! I am for any wea-
‘ pon,—the pen, till one can find something sharper,
‘ will do for a beginning.

‘ You can have no conception of the ludicrous
‘ solemnity with which these two stanzas have been
‘ treated. The Morning Post gave notice of an in-
‘ tended motion in the House of my brethren on the
‘ subject, and God he knows what proceedings besides;
‘ —and all this, as Bedreddin in the “Nights” says,
‘ “for making a cream tart without pepper.” This
‘ last piece of intelligence is, I presume, too laughable
‘ to be true; and the destruction of the Custom-house
‘ appears to have, in some degree, interfered with
‘ mine; added to which, the last battle of Buonaparte
‘ has usurped the column hitherto devoted to my bul-
‘ letin.

‘ I send you from this day’s Morning Post the best
‘ which have hitherto appeared on this “impudent
‘ doggerel,” as the Courier calls it. There was
‘ another about my *diet*, when a boy—not at all
‘ bad—some time ago; but the rest are but indif-
‘ ferent.

‘ I shall think about your *oratorical* hint*;—but I
‘ have never set much upon “that cast,” and am
‘ grown as tired as Solomon of everything, and of
‘ myself more than anything. This is being what the
‘ learned call philosophical, and the vulgar lack-a-

* I had endeavoured to persuade him to take a part in parliamentary affairs, and to exercise his talent for oratory more frequently.

‘ daisical. I am, however, always, glad of a blessing *;
 ‘ pray, repeat yours soon,—at least your letter, and
 ‘ I shall think the benediction included.

‘ Ever, &c.’

LETTER 167.

TO MR. DALLAS.

‘ February 17th, 1814. .

‘ The Courier of this evening accuses me of having
 ‘ “received and pocketed” large sums for my works.
 ‘ I have never yet received, nor wished to receive, a
 ‘ farthing for any. Mr. Murray offered a thousand
 ‘ for the Giaour and Bride of Abydos, which I said
 ‘ was too much, and that if he could afford it at the end
 ‘ of six months, I would then direct how it might be
 ‘ disposed of; but neither then, nor at any other pe-
 ‘ riod, have I ever availed myself of the profits on my
 ‘ own account. For the republication of the Satire, I
 ‘ refused four hundred guineas; and for the previous
 ‘ editions I never asked nor received a *sous*, nor for
 ‘ any writing whatever. I do not wish you to do any-
 ‘ thing disagreeable to yourself; there never was nor
 ‘ shall be any conditions nor stipulations with regard
 ‘ to any accommodation that I could afford you; and,
 ‘ on your part, I can see nothing derogatory in receiv-
 ‘ ing the copyright. It was only assistance afforded
 ‘ to a worthy man, by one not quite so worthy.

‘ Mr. Murray is going to contradict this†; but your
 ‘ *name* will not be mentioned: for your own part, you
 ‘ are a free agent, and are to do as you please. I only
 ‘ hope that now, as always, you will think that I wish
 ‘ to take no unfair advantage of the accidental oppor-

* In concluding my letter, having said ‘God bless you!’ I added—
 ‘ that is, if you have no objection.’

† The statement of the Courier, &c.

‘ With respect to his two other poems, the *Giaour* and
 ‘ the *Bride of Abydos*, Mr. Murray, the publisher of
 ‘ them, can truly attest that no part of the sale of them
 ‘ has ever touched his hands, or been disposed of for
 ‘ his use. Having said thus much as to facts, I cannot
 ‘ but express my surprise that it should ever be deemed
 ‘ a matter of reproach that he should appropriate the
 ‘ pecuniary returns of his works. Neither rank nor
 ‘ fortune seems to me to place any man above this;
 ‘ for what difference does it make in honour and noble
 ‘ feelings, whether a copyright be bestowed, or its
 ‘ value employed in beneficent purposes? I differ
 ‘ with my Lord Byron on this subject as well as some
 ‘ others; and he has constantly, both by word and
 ‘ action, shown his aversion to receiving money for his
 ‘ productions.’

LETTER 168.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *February 26th, 1814.*

‘ Dallas had, perhaps, have better kept silence;—
 ‘ but that was *his* concern, and, as his facts are correct,
 ‘ and his motive not dishonourable to himself, I wished
 ‘ him well through it. As for his interpretations of
 ‘ the lines, he and any one else may interpret them as
 ‘ they please. I have and shall adhere to my taciturnity,
 ‘ unless something very particular occurs to render this impossible.
 ‘ Do *not you* say a word. If any
 ‘ one is to speak, it is the person principally concerned.
 ‘ The most amusing thing is, that every one (to me)
 ‘ attributes the abuse to the *man they personally most*
 ‘ *dislike!*—some say C * * r, some C * * e, others
 ‘ F * * d, &c. &c. &c. I do not know, and have no clue
 ‘ but conjecture. If discovered, and he turns out a

‘ hireling, he must be left to his wages ; if a cavalier,
‘ he must “ wink, and hold out his iron.” ’

‘ I had some thoughts of putting the question to
‘ C * * r, but H., who, I am sure, would not dissuade
‘ me if it were right, advised me by all means *not* ;—
‘ “ that I had no right to take it upon suspicion,”
‘ &c. &c. Whether H. is correct, I am not aware,
‘ but he believes himself so, and says there can be
‘ but one opinion on that subject. This I am,
‘ at least, sure of, that he would never prevent
‘ me from doing what he deemed the duty of a
‘ *preux* chevalier. In such cases—at least, in this
‘ country—we must act according to usages. In con-
‘ sidering this instance, I dismiss my own personal
‘ feelings. Any man will and must fight, when neces-
‘ sary,—even without a motive. *Here*, I should take
‘ it up really without much resentment ; for, unless a
‘ woman one likes is in the way, it is some years since
‘ I felt a *long* anger. But, undoubtedly, could I, or
‘ may I, trace it to a man of station, I should and shall
‘ do what is proper.

‘ * * was angerly, but tried to conceal it. *You* are
‘ not called upon to avow the “ Twopenny,” and would
‘ only gratify them by so doing. Do you not see the
‘ great object of all these fooleries is to set him, and
‘ you, and me, and all persons whatsoever, by the ears?
‘ —more especially those who are on good terms,—
‘ and nearly succeeded. Lord H. wished me to *con-*
‘ *cede* to Lord Carlisle—concede to the devil!—to a
‘ man who used me ill ? I told him, in answer, that I
‘ would neither concede, nor recede on the subject,
‘ but be silent altogether ; unless anything more could
‘ be said about Lady H. and himself, who had been
‘ since my very good friends ;—and there it ended.
‘ This was no time for concessions to Lord C.

‘ I have been interrupted, but shall write again
‘ soon. Believe me ever, my dear Moore, &c.’

Another of his friends having expressed, soon after, some intention of volunteering publicly in his defence, he lost no time in repressing him by the following sensible letter.

LETTER 169. TO W * * W * *, Esq.

‘ February 28th, 1814.

‘ My dear W.,

‘ I have but a few moments to write to you.
‘ *Silence* is the only answer to the things you mention ;
‘ nor should I regard that man as my friend who said
‘ a word more on the subject. I care little for attacks,
‘ but I will not submit to *defences*; and I do hope
‘ and trust that *you* have never entertained a serious
‘ thought of engaging in so foolish a controversy.
‘ Dallas’s letter was, to his credit, merely as to facts
‘ which he had a right to state; *I* neither have nor
‘ shall take the least *public* notice, nor permit any one
‘ else to do so. If I discover the writer, then I may
‘ act in a different manner; but it will not be in
‘ writing.

‘ An expression in your letter has induced me to
‘ write this to you, to entreat you not to interfere in
‘ any way in such a business,—it is now nearly over,
‘ and depend upon it *they* are much more chagrined
‘ by my silence than they could be by the best defence
‘ in the world. I do not know anything that would
‘ vex me more than any further reply to these things.

‘ Ever yours, in haste,

‘ B.’

LETTER 170.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *March 3, 1814.*

‘ My dear Friend,

‘ I have a great mind to tell you that I *am* “un-
‘ comfortable,” if only to make you come to town;
‘ where no one ever more delighted in seeing you, nor
‘ is there any one to whom I would sooner turn for
‘ consolation in my most vapourish moments. The
‘ truth is, I have “no lack of argument” to ponder
‘ upon of the most gloomy description, but this arises
‘ from *other* causes. Some day or other, when we are
‘ *veterans*, I may tell you a tale of present and past
‘ times; and it is not from want of confidence that I do
‘ not now,—but—but—always a *but* to the end of the
‘ chapter.

‘ There is nothing, however, upon [the *spot* either to
‘ love or hate;—but I certainly have subjects for both
‘ at no very great distance, and am besides embarrassed
‘ between *three* whom I know, and one (whose name,
‘ at least) I do not know. All this would be very well
‘ if I had no heart; but, unluckily, I have found that
‘ there is such a thing still about me, though in no
‘ very good repair, and, also, that it has a habit of
‘ attaching itself to *one*, whether I will or no. “Divide
‘ et impera,” I begin to think, will only do for poli-
‘ tics.

‘ If I discover the “toad,” as you call him, I shall
‘ “tread,”—and put spikes in my shoes to do it more
‘ effectually. The effect of all these fine things I do
‘ not inquire much nor perceive. I believe * * felt
‘ them more than either of us. People are civil enough,
‘ and I have had no dearth of invitations,—none of
‘ which, however, I have accepted. I went out very

‘ little last year, and mean to go about still less. I
 ‘ have no passion for circles, and have long regretted
 ‘ that I ever gave way to what is called a town life ;—
 ‘ which, of all the lives I ever saw (and they are nearly
 ‘ as many as Plutarch’s), seems to me to leave the least
 ‘ for the past and future.

‘ How proceeds the Poem ? Do not neglect it, and
 ‘ I have no fears. I need not say to you that your
 ‘ fame is dear to me,—I really might say *dearer* than
 ‘ my own ; for I have lately begun to think my things
 ‘ have been strangely overrated ; and, at any rate,
 ‘ whether or not, I have done with them for ever. I
 ‘ may say to you, what I would not say to everybody,
 ‘ that the last two were written, the *Bride* in four, and
 ‘ the *Corsair* in ten days*,—which I take to be a most
 ‘ humiliating confession, as it proves my own want of
 ‘ judgment in publishing, and the public’s in reading
 ‘ things, which cannot have stamina for permanent
 ‘ attention. “ So much for Buckingham.”

‘ I have no dread of your being too hasty, and I have
 ‘ still less of your failing. But I think a *year* a very
 ‘ fair allotment of time to a composition which is not
 ‘ to be Epic ; and even Horace’s “ *Nonum prematur*”
 ‘ must have been intended for the Millennium, or some
 ‘ longer-lived generation than ours. I wonder how

* In asserting that he devoted but four days to the composition of the *Bride*, he must be understood to refer only to the first sketch of that poem,—the successive additions by which it was increased to its present length having occupied, as we have seen, a much longer period. The *Corsair*, on the contrary, was, from beginning to end, struck off at a heat—there being but little alteration or addition afterwards,—and the rapidity with which it was produced (being at the rate of nearly two hundred lines a day) would be altogether incredible, had we not his own, as well as his publisher’s testimony to the fact. Such an achievement,—taking into account the surpassing beauty of the work,—is, perhaps, wholly without a parallel in the history of Genius, and shows that ‘ *écrire par passion*,’ as Rousseau expresses it, may be sometimes a shorter road to perfection than any that Art has ever struck out.

‘ much we should have had of *him*, had he observed
 ‘ his own doctrines to the letter. Peace be with you !
 ‘ Remember that I am always and most truly
 ‘ yours, &c.

‘ P. S. I never heard the “report” you mention,
 ‘ nor, I dare say, many others. But, in course, you,
 ‘ as well as others, have “damned good-natured
 ‘ friends,” who do their duty in the usual way. One
 ‘ thing will make you laugh. * * * *

LETTER 171.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *March 12th, 1814.*

“ Guess darkly, and you will seldom err. At
 ‘ present, I shall say no more, and, perhaps—but no
 ‘ matter. I hope we shall some day meet, and what-
 ‘ ever years may precede or succeed it, I shall mark it
 ‘ with the “white stone” in my calendar. I am not
 ‘ sure that I shall not soon be in your neighbour-
 ‘ hood again. If so, and I am alone (as will probably
 ‘ be the case), I shall invade and carry you off, and
 ‘ endeavour to atone for sorry fare by a sincere wel-
 ‘ come. I don’t know the person absent (barring “the
 ‘ sect”) I should be so glad to see again.

‘ I have nothing of the sort you mention but *the*
 ‘ *lines* (the Weepers), if you like to have them in the
 ‘ Bag. I wish to give them all possible circulation. The
 ‘ *Vault* reflection is downright actionable, and to print
 ‘ it would be peril to the publisher ; but I think the
 ‘ Tears have a natural right to be bagged, and the
 ‘ editor (whoever he may be) might supply a facetious
 ‘ note or not, as he pleased.

‘ I cannot conceive how the *Vault* * has got about,—

* Those bitter and powerful lines which he wrote on the opening of the vault that contained the remains of Henry VIII. and Charles I.

‘ but so it is. It is too *farouche* ; but, truth to say,
‘ my satires are not very playful. I have the plan of
‘ an epistle in my head, *at* him and *to* him ; and, if
‘ they are not a little quieter, I shall embody it. I
‘ should say little or nothing of *myself*. As to mirth
‘ and ridicule, that is out of my way ; but I have a
‘ tolerable fund of sternness and contempt, and, with
‘ Juvenal before me, I shall perhaps read him a lec-
‘ ture he has not lately heard in the C——t. From
‘ particular circumstances, which came to my know-
‘ ledge almost by accident, I could “ tell him what he
‘ is—I know him well.”

‘ I meant, my dear M., to write to you a long letter,
‘ but I am hurried, and time clips my inclination down
‘ to yours, &c.

‘ P.S. *Think again* before you *shelf* your Poem.
‘ There is a youngster (older than me, by the by, but
‘ a younger poet), Mr. G. Knight, with a vol. of
‘ Eastern Tales, written since his return,—for he has
‘ been in the countries. He sent to me last summer,
‘ and I advised him to write one in *each measure*, with-
‘ out any intention, at that time, of doing the same
‘ thing. Since that, from a habit of writing in a fever,
‘ I have anticipated him in the variety of measures, but
‘ quite unintentionally. Of the stories, I know no-
‘ thing, not having seen them * ; but *he* has some lady
‘ in a sack, too, like the Giaour:—he told me at the
‘ time.

‘ The best way to make the public “ forget ” me is
‘ to remind them of yourself. You cannot suppose
‘ that *I* would ask you or advise you to publish, if I
‘ thought you would *fail*. I really have *no* literary

* He was not yet aware, it appears, that the anonymous manuscript sent to him by his publisher was from the pen of Mr. Knight.

‘ envy ; and I do not believe a friend’s success ever sat
 ‘ nearer another than yours do to my best wishes. It
 ‘ is for *elderly gentlemen* to “ bear no brother near,” and
 ‘ cannot become our disease for more years than we
 ‘ may perhaps number. I wish you to be out before
 ‘ Eastern subjects are again before the public.’

LETTER 172.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *March 12th, 1814.*

‘ I have not time to read the whole MS.*, but
 ‘ what I have seen seems very well written (both *prose*
 ‘ and *verse*), and though I am and can be no judge (at
 ‘ least a *fair* one on this subject), containing nothing
 ‘ which you *ought* to hesitate publishing upon *my*
 ‘ account. If the author is not Dr. *Busby* himself, I
 ‘ think it a pity, on his *own* account, that he should
 ‘ dedicate it to his subscribers; nor can I perceive
 ‘ what Dr. Busby has to do with the matter, except as
 ‘ a translator of Lucretius, for whose doctrines he is
 ‘ surely not responsible. I tell you openly, and really
 ‘ most sincerely, that, if published at all, there is no
 ‘ earthly reason why you should *not*; on the con-
 ‘ trary, I should receive it as the greatest compliment
 ‘ *you* could pay to your good opinion of my candour,
 ‘ to print and circulate that, or any other work, attack-
 ‘ ing me in a manly manner, and without any malicious
 ‘ intention, from which, as far as I have seen, I must
 ‘ exonerate this writer.

‘ He is wrong in one thing—I am no *atheist*; but if
 ‘ he thinks I have published principles tending to such
 ‘ opinions, he has a perfect right to controvert them.

* The manuscript of a long grave satire, entitled ‘ *Anti-Byron*,’ which had been sent to Mr. Murray, and by him forwarded to Lord Byron, with a request—not meant, I believe, seriously—that he would give his opinion as to the propriety of publishing it.

‘ Pray publish it; I shall never forgive myself if I
‘ think that I have prevented you.

‘ Make my compliments to the author, and tell him
‘ I wish him success; his verse is very deserving of
‘ it; and I shall be the last person to suspect his mo-
‘ tives. Yours, &c.

‘ P.S. If *you* do not publish it, some one else will.
‘ You cannot suppose me so narrow-minded as to
‘ shrink from discussion. I repeat once for all, that I
‘ think it a good Poem (as far as I have redde); and
‘ that is the only point *you* should consider. How odd
‘ that *eight lines* should have given birth, I really
‘ think, to *eight thousand*, including *all* that has been
‘ said, and will be, on the subject!’

LETTER 173.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ April 9th, 1814.

‘ All these news are very fine; but nevertheless I
‘ want my books, if you can find, or cause them to be
‘ found for me,—if only to lend them to Napoleon in
‘ “the island of Elba,” during his retirement. I also
‘ (if convenient, and you have no party with you) should
‘ be glad to speak with you for a few minutes this
‘ evening, as I have had a letter from Mr. Moore,
‘ and wish to ask you, as the best judge, of the best
‘ time for him to publish the work he has composed.
‘ I need not say, that I have his success much at heart;
‘ not only because he is my friend, but something
‘ much better—a man of great talent, of which he is
‘ less sensible than I believe any even of his enemies.
‘ If you can so far oblige me as to step down, do so;
‘ and if you are otherwise occupied, say nothing about
‘ it. I shall find you at home in the course of next
‘ week.

‘ P.S. I see Sotheby’s Tragedies advertised. The
‘ Death of Darnley is a famous subject—one of the
‘ best, I should think, for the drama. Pray let me
‘ have a copy, when ready.

‘ Mrs. Leigh was very much pleased with her books,
‘ and desired me to thank you; she means, I believe,
‘ to write to you her acknowledgments.’

LETTER 174.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ 2, Albany, April 9th, 1814.

‘ Viscount Althorp is about to be married, and I
‘ have gotten his spacious bachelor apartments in
‘ Albany, to which you will, I hope, address a speedy
‘ answer to this mine epistle.

‘ I am but just returned to town, from which you
‘ may infer that I have been out of it; and I have been
‘ boxing, for exercise, with Jackson for this last month
‘ daily. I have also been drinking; and, on one occa-
‘ sion, with three other friends at the Cocoa Tree, from
‘ six till four, yea, unto five in the matin. We cla-
‘ reted and champagned till two—then supped, and
‘ finished with a kind of regency punch composed of
‘ madeira, brandy, and *green* tea, no *real* water being
‘ admitted therein. There was a night for you!
‘ without once quitting the table, except to ambulate
‘ home, which I did alone, and in utter contempt of a
‘ hackney-coach and my own *vis*, both of which were
‘ deemed necessary for our conveyance. And so,—I
‘ am very well, and they say it will hurt my constitu-
‘ tion.

‘ I have also, more or less, been breaking a few of
‘ the favourite commandments; but I mean to pull up
‘ and marry, if any one will have me. In the mean
‘ time, the other day I nearly killed myself with a

‘ collar of brawn, which I swallowed for supper, and
‘ indigested for I don’t know how long : but that is by
‘ the by. All this gourmandise was in honour of Lent;
‘ for I am forbidden meat all the rest of the year, but
‘ it is strictly enjoined me during your solemn fast. I
‘ have been, and am, in very tolerable love; but of
‘ that hereafter as it may be.

‘ My dear Moore, say what you will in your Pre-
‘ face; and quiz any thing or any body,—me if you
‘ like it. Oons! dost thou think me of the *old*, or
‘ rather *elderly*, school? If one can’t jest with one’s
‘ friends, with whom can we be facetious? You have
‘ nothing to fear from **, whom I have not seen, being
‘ out of town when he called. He will be very cor-
‘ rect, smooth, and all that, but I doubt whether there
‘ will be any “ grace beyond the reach of art ;”—and,
‘ whether there is or not, how long will you be so
‘ d—d modest? As for Jeffrey, it is a very handsome
‘ thing of him to speak well of an old antagonist,—
‘ and what a mean mind dared not do. Any one
‘ will revoke praise; but—were it not partly my own
‘ case—I should say that very few have strength of
‘ mind to unsay their censure, or follow it up with
‘ praise of other things.

‘ What think you of the review of *Levis*? It beats
‘ the Bag and my hand-grenade hollow, as an invec-
‘ tive, and hath thrown the Court into hysterics, as
‘ I hear from very good authority. Have you heard
‘ from * * *.

‘ No more rhyme for—or rather, *from*—me. I have
‘ taken my leave of that stage, and henceforth will
‘ mountebank it no longer. I have had my day, and
‘ there’s an end. The utmost I expect, or even wish,
‘ is to have it said in the *Biographia Britannica*, that

‘ I might perhaps have been a poet, had I gone on
‘ and amended. My great comfort is, that the tem-
‘ porary celebrity I have wrung from the world has
‘ been in the very teeth of all opinions and prejudices.
‘ I have flattered no ruling powers; I have never con-
‘ cealed a single thought that tempted me. They
‘ can’t say I have truckled to the times, nor to popular
‘ topics (as Johnson, or somebody, said of Cleveland),
‘ and whatever I have gained has been at the expen-
‘ diture of as much *personal* favour as possible; for I do
‘ believe never was a bard more unpopular, *quoad homo*,
‘ than myself. And now I have done;—“ ludite nunc
‘ alios.” Everybody may be d—d, as they seem fond of
‘ it, and resolved to stickle lustily for endless brimstone.

‘ Oh—by the by, I had nearly forgot. There is a
‘ long Poem, an “Anti-Byron,” coming out, to prove
‘ that I have formed a conspiracy to overthrow, by
‘ *rhyme*, all religion and government, and have already
‘ made great progress! It is not very scurrilous, but
‘ serious and ethereal. I never felt myself important,
‘ till I saw and heard of my being such a little Voltaire
‘ as to induce such a production. Murray would not
‘ publish it, for which he was a fool, and so I told
‘ him; but some one else will, doubtless. “Some-
‘ thing too much of this.”

‘ Your French scheme is good, but let it be *Italian*;
‘ all the Angles will be at Paris. Let it be Rome,
‘ Milan, Naples, Florence, Turin, Venice, or Switzer-
‘ land, and “egad!” (as Bayes saith), I will connubiate
‘ and join you; and we will write a new “Inferno” in
‘ our Paradise. Pray think of this—and I will really
‘ buy a wife and a ring, and say the ceremony, and
‘ settle near you in a summer-house upon the Arno, or
‘ the Po, or the Adriatic.

‘ Ah ! my poor little pagod, Napoleon, has walked
 ‘ off his pedestal. He has abdicated, they say. This
 ‘ would draw molten brass from the eyes of Zatanai.
 ‘ What ! “ kiss the ground before young Malcolm’s
 ‘ feet, and then be baited by the rabble’s curse ! ” I
 ‘ cannot bear such a crouching catastrophe. I must
 ‘ stick to Sylla, for my modern favourites don’t do,—
 ‘ their resignations are of a different kind. All health
 ‘ and prosperity, my dear Moore. Excuse this lengthy
 ‘ letter. Ever, &c.

‘ P. S. The Quarterly quotes you frequently in an
 ‘ article on America ; and everybody I know asks
 ‘ perpetually after you and yours. When will you
 ‘ answer them in person ?’

He did not long persevere in his resolution against writing, as will be seen from the following notes to his publisher.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *April 10th, 1814.*

‘ I have written an Ode on the fall of Napoleon,
 ‘ which, if you like, I will copy out, and make you a
 ‘ present of. Mr. Merivale has seen part of it, and
 ‘ likes it. You may show it to Mr. Gifford, and print
 ‘ it, or not, as you please—it is of no consequence.
 ‘ It contains nothing in *his* favour, and no allusion
 ‘ whatever to our own government, or the Bourbons.
 ‘ Yours, &c.

‘ P. S. It is in the measure of my stanzas at the
 ‘ end of Childe Harold, which were much liked, be-
 ‘ ginning “ And thou art dead,” &c. &c. There are
 ‘ ten stanzas of it—ninety lines in all.’

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ April 11th, 1814.

‘ I enclose you a letter^{et} from Mrs. Leigh.

‘ It will be best *not* to put my name to our *Ode* ;
 ‘ but you may *say* as openly as you like that it is mine,
 ‘ and I can inscribe it to Mr. Hobhouse, from the
 ‘ *author*, which will mark it sufficiently. After the
 ‘ resolution of not publishing, though it is a thing of
 ‘ little length and less consequence, it will be better
 ‘ altogether that it is anonymous ; but we will incor-
 ‘ porate it in the first *tome* of ours that you find time
 ‘ or the wish to publish. Yours alway, B.

‘ P.S. I hope you got a note of alterations, sent
 ‘ this matin ?

‘ P.S. Oh my books ! my books ! will you never
 ‘ find my books ?

‘ Alter “*potent* spell” to “*quicken*ing spell :” the
 ‘ first (as Polonius says) “ is a vile phrase,” and means
 ‘ nothing, besides being common-place and *Rosa-*
 ‘ *Matilda-ish*.’

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ April 12th, 1814.

‘ I send you a few notes and trifling alterations,
 ‘ and an additional motto from Gibbon, which you
 ‘ will find *singularly appropriate*. A “ Good-natured
 ‘ Friend ” tells me there is a most scurrilous attack on
 ‘ *us* in the Antijacobin Review, which you have *not*
 ‘ sent. Send it, as I am in that state of languor
 ‘ which will derive benefit from getting into a passion.
 ‘ Ever, &c.’

LETTER 175.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ Albany, April 20th, 1814.

‘ I *am* very glad to hear that you are to be tran-
 ‘ sient from Mayfield so very soon, and was taken in

‘ by the first part of your letter *. Indeed, for aught
 ‘ I know, you may be treating me, as Slipslop says,
 ‘ with “ironing” even now. I shall say nothing of
 ‘ the *shock*, which had nothing of *humeur* in it; as I
 ‘ am apt to take even a critic, and still more a friend,
 ‘ at his word, and never to doubt that I have been
 ‘ writing cursed nonsense, if they say so. There was
 ‘ a mental reservation in my pact with the public†, in
 ‘ behalf of *anonymes*; and, even had there not, the
 ‘ provocation was such as to make it physically impos-
 ‘ sible to pass over this damnable epoch of triumphant
 ‘ tameness. ’Tis a cursed business; and, after all, I
 ‘ shall think higher of rhyme and reason, and very
 ‘ humbly of your heroic people, till—Elba becomes a
 ‘ volcano, and sends him out again. I can’t think it
 ‘ all over yet.

‘ My departure for the continent depends, in some
 ‘ measure, on the *incontinent*. I have two country
 ‘ invitations at home, and don’t know what to say or
 ‘ do. In the mean time, I have bought a macaw and
 ‘ a parrot, and have got up my books; and I box and
 ‘ fence daily, and go out very little.

* I had begun my letter in the following manner:—‘ Have you seen
 ‘ the “Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte?”—I suspect it to be either
 ‘ F—g—d’s or Rosa Matilda’s. Those rapid and masterly portraits of
 ‘ all the tyrants that preceded Napoleon have a vigour in them which
 ‘ would incline me to say that Rosa Matilda is the person—but then, on
 ‘ the other hand, that powerful grasp of history,’ &c. &c. After a little
 ‘ more of this mock parallel, the letter went on thus:—‘ I should like to
 ‘ know what *you* think of the matter?—Some friends of mine here *will*
 ‘ insist that it is the work of the author of Childe Harold,—but then they
 ‘ are not so well read in F—g—d and Rosa Matilda as I am; and, be-
 ‘ sides, they seem to forget that *you* promised, about a month or two ago,
 ‘ not to write any more for years. Seriously,’ &c. &c.

I quote this foolish banter merely to show how safely, even on his most sensitive points, one might venture to jest with him.

† We find D’Argenson thus encouraging Voltaire to break a similar vow:—‘ Continue to write without fear for five-and-twenty years longer, but write poetry, notwithstanding your oath in the Preface to *Newton*.’

‘ At this present writing, Louis the Gouty is wheel-
‘ ing in triumph into Piccadilly, in all the pomp and
‘ rabblement of royalty. I had an offer of seats to see
‘ them pass; but, as I have seen a Sultan going to
‘ mosque, and been at *his* reception of an ambassador,
‘ the most Christian King “hath no attractions for
‘ me:”—though in some coming year of the Hegira, I
‘ should not dislike to see the place where he *had*
‘ reigned, shortly after the second revolution, and a
‘ happy sovereignty of two months, the last six weeks
‘ being civil war.

‘ Pray write, and deem me ever, &c.’

LETTER 176.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ April 21st, 1814.

‘ Many thanks with the letters which I return.
‘ You know I am a jacobin, and could not wear white,
‘ nor see the installation of Louis the Gouty.

‘ This is sad news, and very hard upon the sufferers
‘ at any, but more at *such* a time—I mean the Bayonne
‘ sortie.

‘ You should urge Moore to come *out*.

‘ P.S. I want *Moreri* to purchase for good and all.
‘ I have a Bayle, but want *Moreri* too.

‘ P.S. Perry hath a piece of compliment to-day;
‘ but I think the *name* might have been as well omitted.
‘ No matter; they can but throw the old story of incon-
‘ sistency in my teeth—let them,—I mean, as to not
‘ publishing. However, *now* I will keep my word.
‘ Nothing but the occasion, which was *physically* irre-
‘ sistible, made me swerve; and I thought an *anonyme*
‘ within my *pact* with the public. It is the only thing
‘ I have or shall set about.’

LETTER 177.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ April 25th, 1814.

‘ Let Mr. Gifford have the letter and return it at
 ‘ his leisure. I would have offered it, had I thought
 ‘ that he liked things of the kind.

‘ Do you want the last page *immediately*? I have
 ‘ doubts about the lines being worth printing; at any
 ‘ rate, I must see them again and alter some passages,
 ‘ before they go forth in any shape into the *ocean* of
 ‘ circulation;—a very conceited phrase, by the by:
 ‘ well then—*channel* of publication will do.

‘ “ I am not i’ the vein,” or I could knock off a stanza
 ‘ or three for the Ode, that might answer the purpose
 ‘ better* At all events, I *must* see the lines again

* Mr. Murray had requested of him to make some additions to the Ode, so as to save the Stamp Duty imposed upon publications not exceeding a single sheet; and he afterwards added, in successive editions, five or six stanzas, the original number being but eleven. There were also three more stanzas, which he never printed, but which, for the just tribute they contain to Washington, are worthy of being preserved.

‘ There was a day—there was an hour,
 ‘ While earth was Gaul’s—Gaul thine—
 ‘ When that immeasurable power
 ‘ Unsated to resign
 ‘ Had been an act of purer fame
 ‘ Than gathers round Marengo’s name
 ‘ And gilded thy decline,
 ‘ Through the long twilight of all time,
 ‘ Despite some passing clouds of crime.

‘ But thou forsooth must be a king
 ‘ And don the purple vest,
 ‘ As if that foolish robe could wring
 ‘ Remembrance from thy breast.
 ‘ Where is that faded garment? where
 ‘ The gewgaws thou wert fond to wear,
 ‘ The star—the string—the crest?
 ‘ Vain froward child of empire! say
 ‘ Are all thy playthings snatch’d away?

‘ Where may the wearied eye repose!
 ‘ When gazing on the great;
 ‘ Where neither guilty glory glows,
 ‘ Nor despicable state?

‘ Yes—

‘*first*, as there be two I have altered in my mind’s
 ‘ manuscript already. Has any one seen or judged of
 ‘ them? that is the criterion by which I will abide—
 ‘ only give me a *fair* report, and “nothing extenuate,”
 ‘ as I will in that case do something else.

‘ Ever, &c.

‘ I want *Moreri*, and an *Athenæus*.’

LETTER 178. TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ April 26th, 1814.

‘ I have been thinking that it might be as well to
 ‘ publish no more of the Ode separately, but incor-
 ‘ porate it with any of the other things, and include
 ‘ the smaller Poem too (in that case)—which I must
 ‘ previously correct, nevertheless. I can’t, for the
 ‘ head of me, add a line worth scribbling; my “vein”
 ‘ is quite gone, and my present occupations are of the
 ‘ gymnastic order—boxing and fencing—and my prin-
 ‘ cipal conversation is with my macaw and Bayle. I
 ‘ want my *Moreri*, and I want *Athenæus*.

‘ P.S. I hope you sent back that poetical packet to
 ‘ the address which I forwarded to you on Sunday:
 ‘ if not, pray do; or I shall have the author scream-
 ‘ ing after his Epic.’

LETTER 179. TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ April 26th, 1814.

‘ I have no guess at your author,—but it is a
 ‘ noble Poem*, and worth a thousand Odes of any-

‘ Yes—one—the first—the last—the best—
 ‘ The Cincinnatus of the West,
 ‘ Whom envy dared not hate,
 ‘ Bequeathed the name of Washington,
 ‘ To make man blush there was but One!’

* A Poem by Mr. Stratford Canning, full of spirit and power, entitled
 ‘ Buonaparte.’ In a subsequent note to Mr. Murray, Lord Byron says:—

‘ body’s. I suppose I may keep this copy;—after
 ‘ reading it, I really regret having written my own. I
 ‘ say this very sincerely, albeit unused to think humbly
 ‘ of myself.

‘ I don’t like the additional stanzas *at all*, and they
 ‘ had better be left out. The fact is, I can’t do any-
 ‘ thing I am asked to do, however gladly I *would*;
 ‘ and at the end of a week my interest in a composi-
 ‘ tion goes off. This will account to you for my doing
 ‘ no better for your “ Stamp Duty ” Postscript.

‘ The S. R. is very civil—but what do they mean
 ‘ by Childe Harold resembling Marmion? and the
 ‘ next two, Giaour and Bride, *not* resembling Scott?
 ‘ I certainly never intended to copy him; but, if there
 ‘ be any copyism, it must be in the two Poems, where
 ‘ the same versification is adopted. However, they
 ‘ exempt the Corsair from all resemblance to anything,
 ‘ though I rather wonder at his escape.

‘ If ever I did anything original, it was in Childe
 ‘ Harold, which *I* prefer to the other things always,
 ‘ after the first week. Yesterday I re-read English
 ‘ Bards;—bating the *malice*, it is the *best*.

‘ Ever, &c.’

A resolution was, about this time, adopted by him, which, however strange and precipitate it appeared, a knowledge of the previous state of his mind may enable us to account for satisfactorily. He had now, for two years, been drawing upon the admiration of the public with a rapidity and success which seemed to defy exhaustion,—having crowded, indeed, into that brief interval the materials of a long life of fame. But

‘ I do not think less highly of “ Buonaparte ” for knowing the author. I
 ‘ was aware that he was a man of talent, but did not suspect him of
 ‘ possessing *all* the *family* talents in such perfection.’

admiration is a sort of impost from which most minds are but too willing to relieve themselves. The eye grows weary of looking up to the same object of wonder, and begins to exchange, at last, the delight of observing its elevation for the less generous pleasure of watching and speculating on its fall. The reputation of Lord Byron had already begun to experience some of these consequences of its own prolonged and constantly renewed splendour. Even among that host of admirers who would have been the last to find fault, there were some not unwilling to repose from praise; while they, who had been from the first reluctant eulogists, took advantage of these apparent symptoms of satiety to indulge in blame*.

The loud outcry raised, at the beginning of the present year, by his verses to the Princess Charlotte, had afforded a vent for much of this reserved venom; and the tone of disparagement in which some of his assail-

* It was the fear of this sort of back-water current to which so rapid a flow of fame seemed liable, that led some even of his warmest admirers, ignorant as they were yet of the boundlessness of his resources, to tremble a little at the frequency of his appearances before the public. In one of my own letters to him, I find this apprehension thus expressed:—‘If you did not write so well,—as the Royal wit observed,—I should say you write too much; at least, too much in the same strain. The Pythagoreans, you know, were of opinion that the reason why we do not hear or heed the music of the heavenly bodies is that they are always sounding in our ears; and I fear that even the influence of *your* song may be diminished by falling upon the world’s dull ear too constantly.’

The opinion, however, which a great writer of our day (himself one of the few to whom his remark replies) had the generosity, as well as sagacity, to pronounce on this point, at a time when Lord Byron was indulging in the fullest lavishment of his powers, must be regarded, after all, as the most judicious and wise:—‘But they cater ill for the public,’ says Sir Walter Scott, ‘and give indifferent advice to the poet, supposing him possessed of the highest qualities of his art, who do not advise him to labour while the laurel around his brows yet retains its freshness. Sketches from Lord Byron are more valuable than finished pictures from others; nor are we at all sure that any labour which he might bestow in revision would not rather efface than refine those outlines of striking and powerful originality which they exhibit when flung rough from the hand of a master.’—*Biographical Memoirs, by Sir W. Scott.*

ants now affected to speak of his poetry was, however absurd and contemptible in itself, precisely that sort of attack which was the most calculated to wound his, at once, proud and diffident spirit. As long as they confined themselves to blackening his moral and social character, so far from offending, their libels rather fell in with his own shadowy style of self-portraiture, and gratified the strange inverted ambition that possessed him. But the slighting opinion which they ventured to express of his genius,—seconded as it was by that inward dissatisfaction with his own powers, which they whose standard of excellence is highest are always the surest to feel,—mortified and disturbed him; and, being the first sounds of ill augury that had come across his triumphal career, startled him, as we have seen, into serious doubts of its continuance.

Had he been occupying himself, at the time, with any new task, that confidence in his own energies, which he never truly felt but while in the actual exercise of them, would have enabled him to forget these humiliations of the moment in the glow and excitement of anticipated success. But he had just pledged himself to the world to take a long farewell of poesy,—had sealed up that only fountain from which his heart ever drew refreshment or strength,—and thus was left, idly and helplessly, to brood over the daily taunts of his enemies, without the power of avenging himself when they insulted his person, and but too much disposed to agree with them when they made light of his genius. ‘I am afraid (he says, in noticing these attacks in one of his letters) what you call *trash* is plaguily to the purpose, and very good sense into the bargain; and, to tell the truth, for some little time past, I have been myself much of the same opinion.’

In this sensitive state of mind,—which he but ill disguised or relieved by an exterior of gay defiance or philosophic contempt,—we can hardly feel surprised that he should have, all at once, come to the resolution, not only of persevering in his determination to write no more in future, but of purchasing back the whole of his past copyrights, and suppressing every page and line he had ever written. On his first mention of this design, Mr. Murray naturally doubted as to his seriousness; but the arrival of the following letter, enclosing a draft for the amount of the copyrights, put his intentions beyond question.

LETTER 180.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘2, Albany, April 29th, 1814.

‘ Dear Sir,

‘ I enclose a draft for the money; when paid, send
‘ the copyright. I release you from the thousand
‘ pounds agreed on for the Giaour and Bride, and
‘ there’s an end.

‘ If any accident occurs to me, you may do then as
‘ you please; but, with the exception of two copies of
‘ each for *yourself* only, I expect and request that the
‘ advertisements be withdrawn, and the remaining
‘ copies of *all* destroyed; and any expense so incurred,
‘ I will be glad to defray.

‘ For all this, it might be as well to assign some
‘ reason. I have none to give, except my own caprice,
‘ and I do not consider the circumstances of consequence enough to require explanation.

‘ In course, I need hardly assure you that they never
‘ shall be published with my consent, directly or
‘ indirectly, by any other person whatsoever,—that I
‘ am perfectly satisfied, and have every reason so to

‘ be, with your conduct in all transactions between us
 ‘ as publisher and author.

‘ It will give me great pleasure to preserve your
 ‘ acquaintance, and to consider you as my friend.
 ‘ Believe me very truly, and for much attention,

‘ Your obliged and very obedient servant,

‘ BYRON.

‘ P. S. I do not think that I have overdrawn at
 ‘ Hammersley’s; but if *that* be the case, I can draw for
 ‘ the superflux on Hoare’s. The draft is £5 short, but
 ‘ that I will make up. On payment—*not* before—
 ‘ return the copyright papers.’

In such a conjuncture, an appeal to his good-nature and considerateness was, as Mr. Murray well judged, his best resource; and the following prompt reply will show how easily, and at once, it succeeded.

LETTER 181.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *May 1st, 1814.*

‘ Dear Sir,

‘ If your present note is serious, and it really
 ‘ would be inconvenient, there is an end of the matter:
 ‘ tear my draft, and go on as usual: in that case, we
 ‘ will recur to our former basis. That *I* was perfectly
 ‘ *serious*, in wishing to suppress all future publication,
 ‘ is true; but certainly not to interfere with the con-
 ‘ venience of others, and more particularly your own.
 ‘ Some day, I will tell you the reason of this appa-
 ‘ rently strange resolution. At present, it may be
 ‘ enough to say that I recall it at your suggestion; and
 ‘ as it appears to have annoyed you, I lose no time in
 ‘ saying so.

‘ Yours truly,

‘ B.’

During my stay in town this year, we were almost daily together; and it is in no spirit of flattery to the dead I say, that the more intimately I became acquainted with his disposition and character, the more warmly I felt disposed to take an interest in everything that concerned him. Not that, in the opportunities thus afforded me of observing more closely his defects, I did not discover much to lament, and not a little to condemn. But there was still, in the neighbourhood of even his worst faults, some atoning good quality, which was always sure, if brought kindly and with management into play, to neutralize their ill effects. The very frankness, indeed, with which he avowed his errors seemed to imply a confidence in his own power of redeeming them,—a consciousness that he could afford to be sincere. There was also, in such entire unreserve, a pledge that nothing worse remained behind; and the same quality that laid open the blemishes of his nature gave security for its honesty. ‘The cleanness and purity of one’s mind,’ says Pope, ‘is never better proved than in discovering its own faults, at first view; as when a stream shows the dirt at its bottom, it shows also the transparency of the water.’

The theatre was, at this time, his favourite place of resort. We have seen how enthusiastically he expresses himself on the subject of Mr. Kean’s acting, and it was frequently my good fortune, during this season, to share in his enjoyment of it,—the orchestra being, more than once, the place where, for a nearer view of the actor’s countenance, we took our station. For Kean’s benefit, on the 25th of May, a large party had been made by Lady J * *, to which we both belonged; but Lord Byron having also taken a box for the

occasion, so anxious was he to enjoy the representation uninterrupted, that, by rather an unsocial arrangement, only himself and I occupied his box during the play, while every other in the house was crowded almost to suffocation; nor did we join the remainder of our friends till supper. Between the two parties, however, Mr. Kean had no reason to complain of a want of homage to his talents; as Lord J * *, on that occasion, presented him with a hundred pound share in the theatre; while Lord Byron sent him, next day, the sum of fifty guineas*; and, not long after, on seeing him act some of his favourite parts, made him presents of a handsome snuff-box and a costly Turkish sword.

Such effect had the passionate energy of Kean's acting on his mind, that, once, in seeing him play Sir Giles Overreach, he was so affected as to be seized with a sort of convulsive fit; and we shall find him, some years after, in Italy, when the representation of Alfieri's tragedy of Mirra had agitated him in the same violent manner, comparing the two instances as the only ones in his life when 'anything under reality' had been able to move him so powerfully.

The following are a few of the notes which I received from him during this visit to town.

* To such lengths did he, at this time carry his enthusiasm for Kean, that when Miss O'Neil soon after appeared, and, by her matchless representation of feminine tenderness, attracted all eyes and hearts, he was not only a little jealous of her reputation, as interfering with that of his favourite, but, in order to guard himself against the risk of becoming a convert, refused to go to see her act. I endeavoured sometimes to persuade him into witnessing, at least, one of her performances; but his answer was (punning upon Shakspeare's word, 'unanealed,') 'No—I'm resolved to continue *un-Oneiled*.'

To the great queen of all actresses, however, it will be seen, by the following extract from one of his journals, he rendered due justice:—

"Of actors, Cooke was the most natural, Kemble the most supernatural,—Kean the medium between the two. But Mrs. Siddons was worth them all put together."—*Detached Thoughts*.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ May 4th, 1814.

‘ Last night we supp’d at R——fe’s board, &c.*

‘ I wish people would not shirk their *dinners*—
 ‘ ought it not to have been a dinner †?—and that d—d
 ‘ anchovy sandwich!

‘ That plaguy voice of yours made me sentimental,
 ‘ and almost fall in love with a girl who was recom-
 ‘ mending herself, during your song, by *hating* music.
 ‘ But the song is past, and my passion can wait, till
 ‘ the *pucelle* is more harmonious.

‘ Do you go to Lady Jersey’s to-night? It is a large
 ‘ party, and you won’t be bored into “softening rocks,”
 ‘ and all that. Othello is to-morrow and Saturday
 ‘ too. Which day shall we go? when shall I see you?
 ‘ If you call, let it be after three and as near four as
 ‘ you please. Ever, &c.’

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ May 4th, 1814.

‘ Dear Tom,

‘ Thou hast asked me for a song, and I enclose
 ‘ you an experiment, which has cost me something
 ‘ more than trouble, and is, therefore, less likely to
 ‘ be worth your taking any in your proposed set-
 ‘ ting‡. Now, if it be so, throw it into the fire without
 ‘ phrase.

‘ Ever yours,

‘ BYRON.’

* An epigram here followed which, as founded on a scriptural allusion, I thought it better to omit.

† We had been invited by Lord R. to dine *after* the play,—an arrangement which, from its novelty, delighted Lord Byron exceedingly. The dinner, however, afterwards dwindled into a mere supper, and this change was long a subject of jocular resentment with him.

‡ I had begged of him to write something for me to set to music. The above verses have lately found their way into print, but through a channel not very likely to bring them into circulation. I shall, therefore, leave them here, undisturbed, in their natural position.

' I speak not, I trace not, I breathe not thy name,
 ' There is grief in the sound, there is guilt in the fame;
 ' But the tear which now burns on my cheek may impart
 ' The deep thoughts that dwell in that silence of heart.

 ' Too brief for our passion, too long for our peace
 ' Were those hours—can their joy or their bitterness cease?
 ' We repent—we abjure—we will break from our chain—
 ' We will part,—we will fly to—unite it again!

 ' Oh! thine be the gladness, and mine be the guilt!
 ' Forgive me, adored one!—forsake, if thou wilt;—
 ' But the heart which is thine shall expire undebased,
 ' And *man* shall not break it—whatever *thou* mayst.

 ' And stern to the haughty, but humble to thee,
 ' This soul, in its bitterest blackness, shall be;
 ' And our days seem as swift, and our moments more sweet,
 ' With thee by my side, than with worlds at our feet.

 ' One sigh of thy sorrow, one look of thy love,
 ' Shall turn me or fix, shall reward or reprove;
 ' And the heartless may wonder at all I resign—
 ' Thy lip shall reply, not to them, but to *mine*.

TO MR. MOORE.

' Will you and Rogers come to my box at Covent,
 ' then? I shall be there, and none else—or I won't
 ' be there, if you *twain* would like to go without me.
 ' You will not get so good a place hustling among the
 ' publican *boxers*, with damnable apprentices (six feet
 ' high) on a back row. Will you both oblige me and
 ' come—or one—or neither—or, what you will?
 ' P.S. An' you will, I will call for you at half-past
 ' six, or any time of your own dial.'

TO MR. MOORE.

' I have gotten a box for Othello to-night, and send
 ' the ticket for your friends the R—fes. I seriously
 ' recommend to you to recommend to them to go for
 ' half an hour, if only to see the third act—they will
 ' not easily have another opportunity. We—at least,

‘ I—cannot be there, so there will be no one in their
 ‘ way. Will you give or send it to them? it will
 ‘ come with a better grace from you than me.

‘ I am in no good plight, but will dine at * *’s with
 ‘ you, if I can. There is music and Covent-g.—Will
 ‘ you go, at all events, to my box there afterwards, to
 ‘ see a *débüt* of a young 16* in the “ Child of Nature?” ’

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *Sunday matin.*

‘ Was not Iago perfection? particularly the last
 ‘ look. I was *close* to him (in the orchestra), and
 ‘ never saw an English countenance half so expressive.

‘ I am acquainted with no *immaterial* sensuality so
 ‘ delightful as good acting; and, as it is fitting there
 ‘ should be good plays, now and then, besides Shak-
 ‘ speare’s, I wish you or Campbell would write one:—
 ‘ the rest of “us youth” have not heart enough.

‘ You were cut up in the *Champion*—is it not so?
 ‘ this day, so am I—even to *shocking* the editor. The
 ‘ critic writes well; and as, at present, poesy is not
 ‘ my passion predominant, and my snake of Aaron has
 ‘ swallowed up all the other serpents, I don’t feel frac-
 ‘ tious. I send you the paper, which I mean to take
 ‘ in for the future. We go to M.’s together. Perhaps
 ‘ I shall see you before, but don’t let me *bore* you, now
 ‘ nor ever.

‘ Ever, as now, truly and affectionately, &c.’

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *May 5th, 1814.*

‘ Do you go to the Lady Cahir’s this even? If
 ‘ you do—and whenever we are bound to the same

* Miss Foote’s first appearance, which we witnessed together.

‘ follies—let us embark in the same “ Shippe of
 ‘ Fooles.’ I have been up till five, and up at nine;
 ‘ and feel heavy with only winking for the last three
 ‘ or four nights.

‘ I lost my party and place at supper trying to keep
 ‘ out of the way of ****. I would have gone away
 ‘ altogether, but that would have appeared a worse
 ‘ affectation than t’other. You are of course engaged
 ‘ to dinner, or we may go quietly together to my box
 ‘ at Covent-garden, and afterwards to this assemblage.
 ‘ Why did you go away so soon?

‘ Ever, &c.

‘ P.S. *Ought not R***fe’s* supper to have been
 ‘ a dinner? Jackson is here, and I must fatigue my-
 ‘ self into spirits.’

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *May 18th, 1814.*

‘ Thanks—and punctuality. *What* has passed at
 * * * * House? I suppose that *I* am to know, and
 ‘ “ pars fui ” of the conference. I regret that your
 ‘ * * * *s will detain you so late, but I suppose you
 ‘ will be at Lady Jersey’s. I am going earlier with
 ‘ Hobhouse. You recollect that to-morrow we sup and
 ‘ see Kean.

‘ P.S. *Two* to-morrow is the hour of pugilism.’

The supper, to which he here looks forward, took place at Watier’s, of which club he had lately become a member; and, as it may convey some idea of his irregular mode of diet, and thus account, in part, for the frequent derangement of his health, I shall here attempt, from recollection, a description of his supper on this occasion. We were to have been joined by

Lord R * *, who however did not arrive, and the party accordingly consisted but of ourselves. Having taken upon me to order the repast, and knowing that Lord Byron, for the last two days, had done nothing towards sustenance, beyond eating a few biscuits and (to appease appetite) chewing mastic, I desired that we should have a good supply of, at least, two kinds of fish. My companion, however, confined himself to lobsters, and of these finished two or three, to his own share,—interposing, sometimes, a small liqueur-glass of strong white brandy, sometimes a tumbler of very hot water, and then pure brandy again, to the amount of near half a dozen small glasses of the latter, without which, alternately with the hot water, he appeared to think the lobster could not be digested. After this, we had claret, of which having despatched two bottles between us, at about four o'clock in the morning we parted.

As Pope has thought his 'delicious lobster-nights' worth commemorating, these particulars of one in which Lord Byron was concerned may also have some interest.

Among other nights of the same description which I had the happiness of passing with him, I remember once, in returning home from some assembly at rather a late hour, we saw lights in the windows of his old haunt Stevens's, in Bond-street, and agreed to stop there and sup. On entering, we found an old friend of his, Sir G * * W * *, who joined our party, and the lobsters and brandy and water being put in requisition, it was (as usual on such occasions) broad daylight before we separated.

LETTER 182.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ May 23d, 1814.

‘ I must send you the Java government gazette of
 ‘ July 3d, 1813, just sent to me by Murray. Only
 ‘ think of *our* (for it is you and I) setting paper war-
 ‘ riors in array in the Indian seas. Does not this sound
 ‘ like fame—something almost like *posterity*? It is
 ‘ something to have scribblers squabbling about us
 ‘ 5000 miles off, while we are agreeing so well at
 ‘ home. Bring it with you in your pocket;—it will
 ‘ make you laugh, as it hath me. Ever yours,
 ‘ B.’

‘ P.S. Oh the anecdote ! * * *

To the circumstance mentioned in this letter he recurs more than once in the Journals which he kept abroad; as thus, in a passage of his ‘ Detached Thoughts,’—where it will be perceived that, by a trifling lapse of memory, he represents himself as having produced this gazette, for the first time, on our way to dinner.

‘ In the year 1814, as Moore and I were going to
 ‘ dine with Lord Grey in Portman-square, I pulled
 ‘ out a “ Java Gazette ” (which Murray had sent to
 ‘ me), in which there was a controversy on our respec-
 ‘ tive merits as poets. It was amusing enough that
 ‘ we should be proceeding peaceably to the same table
 ‘ while they were squabbling about us in the Indian
 ‘ seas (to be sure, the paper was dated six months
 ‘ before), and filling columns with Batavian criticism.
 ‘ But this is fame, I presume.’

The following Poem, written about this time, and, apparently, for the purpose of being recited at the

Caledonian Meeting, I insert principally on account of the warm feeling which it breathes towards Scotland and her sons :—

- ‘ Who hath not glow’d above the page where Fame
- ‘ Hath fix’d high Caledon’s unconquer’d name ;
- ‘ The mountain-land which spurn’d the Roman chain,
- ‘ And baffled back the fiery-crested Dane,
- ‘ Whose bright claymore and hardihood of hand
- ‘ No foe could tame—no tyrant could command.
- ‘ That race is gone—but still their children breathe,
- ‘ And glory crowns them with redoubled wreath :
- ‘ O’er Gael and Saxon mingling banners shine,
- ‘ And, England! add their stubborn strength to thine.
- ‘ The blood which flow’d with Wallace flows as free,
- ‘ But now ’tis only shed for fame and thee !
- ‘ Oh! pass not by the Northern veteran’s claim,
- ‘ But give support—the world hath given him fame!
- ‘ The humbler ranks, the lowly brave, who bled
- ‘ While cheerly following where the mighty led—
- ‘ Who sleep beneath the undistinguish’d sod
- ‘ Where happier comrades in their triumph trod,
- ‘ To us bequeath—’tis all their fate allows—
- ‘ The sireless offspring and the lonely spouse :
- ‘ She on high Albyn’s dusky hills may raise
- ‘ The tearful eye in melancholy gaze,
- ‘ Or view, while shadowy auguries disclose
- ‘ The Highland seer’s anticipated woes,
- ‘ The bleeding phantom of each martial form
- ‘ Dim in the cloud, or darkling in the storm ;
- ‘ While sad, she chants the solitary song,
- ‘ The soft lament for him who tarries long—
- ‘ For him, whose distant relics vainly crave
- ‘ The Coronach’s wild requiem to the brave!
- ‘ ’Tis Heaven—not man—must charm away the woe
- ‘ Which bursts when Nature’s feelings newly flow ;
- ‘ Yet tenderness and time may rob the tear
- ‘ Of half its bitterness for one so dear :
- ‘ A nation’s gratitude perchance may spread
- ‘ A thornless pillow for the widow’d head ;
- ‘ May lighten well her heart’s maternal care,
- ‘ And wean from penury the soldier’s heir.’

LETTER 183.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *May 31st, 1814.*

‘ As I shall probably not see you here to-day, I
‘ write to request that, if not inconvenient to yourself,
‘ you will stay in town till *Sunday* ; if not to gratify
‘ me, yet to please a great many others, who will be
‘ very sorry to lose you. As for myself, I can only
‘ repeat that I wish you would either remain a long
‘ time with us, or not come at all ; for these *snatches*
‘ of society make the subsequent separations bitterer
‘ than ever.

‘ I believe you think that I have not been quite fair
‘ with that Alpha and Omega of beauty, &c. with
‘ whom you would willingly have united me. But if
‘ you consider what her sister said on the subject, you
‘ will less wonder that my pride should have taken the
‘ alarm ; particularly as nothing but the every-day
‘ flirtation of every-day people ever occurred between
‘ your heroine and myself. Had Lady * * appeared to
‘ wish it—or even *not* to oppose it—I would have gone
‘ on, and very possibly married (that is, *if* the other
‘ had been equally accordant) with the same indiffer-
‘ ence which has frozen over the “ Black Sea ” of
‘ almost all my passions. It is that very indifference
‘ which makes me so uncertain and apparently capri-
‘ cious. It is not eagerness of new pursuits, but that
‘ nothing impresses me sufficiently to *fix* ; neither do I
‘ feel disgusted, but simply indifferent to almost all
‘ excitements. The proof of this is, that obstacles, the
‘ slightest even, *stop* me. This can hardly be *timidity*,
‘ for I have done some impudent things too, in my
‘ time ; and in almost all cases, opposition is a stimu-
‘ lus. In mine, it is not ; if a straw were in my way,
‘ I could not stoop to pick it up.

‘ I have sent this long tirade, because I would not
 ‘ have you suppose that I have been *trifling* designedly
 ‘ with you or others. If you think so, in the name of
 ‘ St. Hubert (the patron of antlers and hunters) let me
 ‘ be married out of hand—I don’t care to whom, so
 ‘ it amuses anybody else, and don’t interfere with me
 ‘ much in the daytime. Ever, &c.’

LETTER 184.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ June 14th, 1814.

‘ I *could* be very sentimental now, but I won’t. The
 ‘ truth is, that I have been all my life trying to harden
 ‘ my heart, and have not yet quite succeeded—though
 ‘ there are great hopes—and you do not know how it
 ‘ sunk with your departure. What adds to my regret
 ‘ is having seen so little of you during your stay in this
 ‘ crowded desert, where one ought to be able to bear
 ‘ thirst like a camel,—the springs are so few, and most
 ‘ of them so muddy.

‘ The newspapers will tell you all that is to be told
 ‘ of emperors, &c.* They have dined, and supped,

* In a few days after this, he sent me a long rhyming Epistle full of jokes and pleasantries upon everything and every one around him, of which the following are the only parts producible.

‘ “ What say I ? ”—not a syllable further in prose ;
 ‘ I’m your man “ of all measures,” dear Tom,—so, here goes !
 ‘ Here goes, for a swim on the stream of old Time,
 ‘ On those buoyant supporters the bladders of rhyme.
 ‘ If our weight breaks them down, and we sink in the flood,
 ‘ We are smother’d, at least, in respectable mud,
 ‘ Where the Divers of Bathos lie drown’d in a heap,
 ‘ And S * *’s last pæan has pillow’d his sleep ;—
 ‘ That “ Felo de se” who, half drunk with his malmsey,
 ‘ Walk’d out of his depth and was lost in a calm sea,
 ‘ Singing “ Glory to God” in a spick-and-span stanza,
 ‘ The like (since Tom Sternhold was choked) never man saw.
 ‘ The papers have told you, no doubt, of the fusses,
 ‘ The fêtes, and the gapings to get at these Russes,—

‘ Of

‘ and shown their flat faces in all thoroughfares, and
 ‘ several saloons. Their uniforms are very becoming,
 ‘ but rather short in the skirts ; and their conversation
 ‘ is a catechism, for which and the answers I refer you
 ‘ to those who have heard it.

‘ I think of leaving town for Newstead soon. If so,
 ‘ I shall not be remote from your recess, and (unless
 ‘ Mrs. M. detains you at home over the caudle-cup and
 ‘ a new cradle) we will meet. You shall come to me,
 ‘ or I to you, as you like it;—but *meet* we will. An
 ‘ invitation from Aston has reached me, but I do not
 ‘ think I shall go. I have also heard of * * *—I should
 ‘ like to see her again, for I have not met her for years;
 ‘ and though “the light that ne’er can shine again” is
 ‘ set, I do not know that “one dear smile like those of
 ‘ old” might not make me for a moment forget the
 ‘ “dulness” of “life’s stream.”

‘ I am going to R * *’s to-night—to one of those
 ‘ suppers which “*ought* to be dinners.” I have hardly
 ‘ seen her, and never *him*, since you set out. I told
 ‘ you, you were the last link of that chain. As for
 ‘ * *, we have not syllabled one another’s names since.
 ‘ The post will not permit me to continue my scrawl.
 ‘ More anon.

‘ Ever, dear Moore, &c.

‘ Of his Majesty’s suite, up from coachman to Hetman,—
 ‘ And what dignity decks the flat face of the great man.
 ‘ I saw him, last week, at two balls and a party,—
 ‘ For a prince, his demeanour was rather too hearty,
 ‘ You know, ~~we~~ are used to quite different graces,
 * * * * *
 ‘ The Czar’s look, I own, was much brighter and brisker.
 ‘ But then he is sadly deficient in whisker ;
 ‘ And wore but a starless blue coat, and in kersey-
 ‘ -mere breeches whisk’d round in a waltz with the J * *,
 ‘ Who lovely as ever, seem’d just as delighted
 ‘ With majesty’s presence as those she invited.’

‘ P.S. Keep the Journal*, I care not what becomes
 ‘ of it, and if it has amused you I am glad that I kept
 ‘ it. “Lara” is finished, and I am copying him for
 ‘ my third vol., now collecting;—but *no separate pub-*
 ‘ *lication.*’

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ June 14th, 1814.

‘ I return your packet of this morning. Have you
 ‘ heard that Bertrand has returned to Paris with the
 ‘ account of Napoleon’s having lost his senses? It is
 ‘ a *report*; but, if true, I must, like Mr. Fitzgerald
 ‘ and Jeremiah (of lamentable memory) lay claim to
 ‘ prophecy; that is to say, of saying, that he *ought* to
 ‘ go out of his senses, in the penultimate stanza of a
 ‘ certain Ode,—the which, having been pronounced
 ‘ *nonsense* by several profound critics, has a still fur-
 ‘ ther pretension, by its unintelligibility, to inspira-
 ‘ tion. ‘ Ever, &c.’

LETTER 185.

TO MR. ROGERS.

‘ June 19th, 1814.

‘ I am always obliged to trouble you with my awk-
 ‘ wardnesses, and now I have a fresh one. Mr. W.†
 ‘ called on me several times, and I have missed the
 ‘ honour of making his acquaintance, which I regret,
 ‘ but which *you*, who know my desultory and uncertain
 ‘ habits, will not wonder at, and will, I am sure, attri-
 ‘ bute to anything but a wish to offend a person who
 ‘ has shown me much kindness, and possesses cha-
 ‘ racter and talents entitled to general respect. My

* The Journal from which I have given extracts in the preceding pages.

† Mr. Wrangham.

‘ mornings are late, and passed in fencing and boxing,
 ‘ and a variety of most unpoetical exercises, very
 ‘ wholesome, &c., but would be very disagreeable to
 ‘ my friends, whom I am obliged to exclude during
 ‘ their operation. I never go out till the evening, and
 ‘ I have not been fortunate enough to meet Mr. W. at
 ‘ Lord Lansdowne’s or Lord Jersey’s, where I had
 ‘ hoped to pay him my respects.

‘ I would have written to him, but a few words from
 ‘ you will go further than all the apologetical sesqui-
 ‘ pedalities I could muster on the occasion. It is
 ‘ only to say that, without intending it, I contrive to
 ‘ behave very ill to everybody, and am very sorry
 ‘ for it.

‘ Ever, dear R., &c.’

The following undated notes to Mr. Rogers must have been written about the same time.

‘ *Sunday.*

‘ Your non-attendance at Corinne’s is very *apropos*,
 ‘ as I was on the eve of sending you an excuse. I do
 ‘ not feel well enough to go there this evening, and
 ‘ have been obliged to despatch an apology. I believe
 ‘ I need not add one for not accepting Mr. Sheridan’s
 ‘ invitation on Wednesday, which I fancy both you
 ‘ and I understood in the same sense:—with him the
 ‘ saying of Mirabeau, that “*words are things*,” is not
 ‘ to be taken literally.

‘ Ever, &c.

‘ I will call for you at a quarter before *seven*, if that
 ‘ will suit you. I return you Sir Proteus*, and shall

* A satirical pamphlet, in which all the writers of the day were attacked.

‘ merely add in return, as Johnson said of, and to,
 ‘ somebody or other, “Are we alive after all this
 ‘ censure?”

‘ Believe me, &c.’

‘ *Tuesday.*

‘ Sheridan was yesterday, at first, too sober to re-
 ‘ member your invitation, but in the dregs of the third
 ‘ bottle he fished up his memory. The Staël out-talked
 ‘ Whitbread, was *ironed* by Sheridan, confounded Sir
 ‘ Humphry, and utterly perplexed your slave. The
 ‘ rest (great names in the red book, nevertheless)
 ‘ were mere segments of the circle. Ma’m selle
 ‘ danced a Russ saraband with great vigour, grace,
 ‘ and expression.

‘ Ever, &c.’

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *June 21st, 1814.*

‘ I suppose “Lara” is gone to the devil,—which
 ‘ is no great matter, only let me know, that I may be
 ‘ saved the trouble of copying the rest, and put the
 ‘ first part into the fire. I really have no anxiety about
 ‘ it, and shall not be sorry to be saved the copying,
 ‘ which goes on very slowly, and may prove to you
 ‘ that you may *speak out*—or I should be less sluggish.

‘ Yours, &c.’

LETTER 186.

TO MR. ROGERS.

‘ *June 27th, 1814.*

‘ You could not have made me a more acceptable
 ‘ present than Jacqueline,—she is all grace, and soft-
 ‘ ness, and poetry; there is so much of the last, that
 ‘ we do not feel the want of story, which is simple, yet

‘ *enough*. I wonder that you do not oftener unbend
 ‘ to more of the same kind. I have some sympathy
 ‘ with the *softer* affections, though very little in *my*
 ‘ way, and no one can depict them so truly and suc-
 ‘ cessfully as yourself. I have half a mind to pay you
 ‘ in kind, or rather *unkind*, for I have just “supped
 ‘ full of horror” in two Cantos of darkness and dismay.

‘ Do you go to Lord Essex’s to-night? if so, will
 ‘ you let me call for you at your own hour? I dined
 ‘ with Holland-house yesterday at Lord Cowper’s; my
 ‘ lady very gracious, which she can be more than any
 ‘ one when she likes. I was not sorry to see them
 ‘ again, for I can’t forget that they have been very
 ‘ kind to me.

‘ Ever yours most truly,

‘ BN.

‘ P. S. Is there any chance or possibility of making
 ‘ it up with Lord Carlisle, as I feel disposed to do
 ‘ anything reasonable or unreasonable to effect it? I
 ‘ would before, but for the “*Courier*,” and the pos-
 ‘ sible misconstructions at such a time. Perpend,
 ‘ pronounce.’

On my return to London, for a short time, at the beginning of July, I found his Poem of “*Lara*,” which he had begun at the latter end of May, in the hands of the printer, and nearly ready for publication. He had, before I left town, repeated to me, as we were on our way to some evening party, the first one hundred and twenty lines of the Poem, which he had written the day before,—at the same time giving me a general sketch of the characters and the story.

His short notes to Mr. Murray, during the printing of this work, are of the same impatient and whimsical

character as those, of which I have already given specimens, in my account of his preceding publications: but, as matter of more interest now presses upon us, I shall forbear from transcribing them at length. In one of them he says, ‘I have just corrected some of the ‘most horrible blunders that ever crept into a proof:’—in another, ‘I hope the next proof will be better; this ‘was one which would have consoled Job, if it had ‘been of his “enemy’s book:”’—a third contains only the following words: ‘Dear sir, you demanded more ‘*battle*—there it is. Yours, &c.’

The two letters that immediately follow were addressed to me, at this time, in town.

LETTER 187.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘*July 8th, 1814.*

‘I returned to town last night, and had some ‘hopes of seeing you to-day, and would have called,— ‘but I have been (though in exceeding distempered ‘good health) a little head-achy with free living, ‘as it is called, and am now at the freezing point of ‘returning soberness. Of course, I should be sorry ‘that our parallel lines did not deviate into intersec- ‘tion before you return to the country,—after that ‘same nonsuit*, whereof the papers have told us,—but, ‘as you must be much occupied, I won’t be affronted, ‘should your time and business militate against our ‘meeting.

‘Rogers and I have almost coalesced into a joint ‘invasion of the public. Whether it will take place ‘or not, I do not yet know, and I am afraid Jacqueline

* He alludes to an action for piracy brought by Mr. Power (the publisher of my musical works), to the trial of which I had been summoned as a witness.

‘ (which is very beautiful) will be in bad company*.

‘ But in this case, the lady will not be the sufferer.

‘ I am going to the sea, and then to Scotland ; and
 ‘ I have been doing nothing,—that is, no good,—and
 ‘ am very truly, &c.’

LETTER 188.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ I suppose, by your non-appearance, that the
 ‘ philosophy of my note, and the previous silence of
 ‘ the writer, have put or kept you in *humeur*. Never
 ‘ mind—it is hardly worth while.

‘ This day have I received information from my man
 ‘ of law of the *non*—and never likely to be—perform-
 ‘ ance of purchase by Mr. Claughton, of *impecuniary*
 ‘ memory. He don’t know what to do, or when to
 ‘ pay ; and so all my hopes and worldly projects and
 ‘ prospects are gone to the devil. He (the purchaser,
 ‘ and the devil too, for aught I care) and I, and my
 ‘ legal advisers, are to meet to-morrow,—the said pur-
 ‘ chaser having first taken special care to inquire
 ‘ “whether I would meet him with temper?”—Cer-
 ‘ tainly. The question is this—I shall either have the
 ‘ estate back, which is as good as ruin, or I shall go
 ‘ on with him dawdling, which is rather worse. I
 ‘ have brought my pigs to a Mussulman market. If I
 ‘ had but a wife now, and children, of whose paternity
 ‘ I entertained doubts, I should be happy, or rather
 ‘ fortunate, as Candide or Scarmentado. In the mean
 ‘ time, if you don’t come and see me, I shall think
 ‘ think that Sam.’s bank is broke too ; and that you,
 ‘ having assets there, are despairing of more than a
 ‘ piastre in the pound for your dividend. Ever, &c.’

* Lord Byron afterwards proposed that I should make a third in this publication ; but the honour was a perilous one, and I begged leave to decline it.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ July 11th, 1814.

‘ You shall have one of the pictures. I wish you
 ‘ to send the proof of “Lara” to Mr. Moore, 33, Bury-
 ‘ street, *to-night*, as he leaves town to-morrow, and
 ‘ wishes to see it before he goes*; and I am also will-
 ‘ ing to have the benefit of his remarks. Yours, &c.’

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ July 18th, 1814.

‘ I think *you* will be satisfied even to *repletion* with
 ‘ our northern friends†, and I won’t deprive you longer
 ‘ of what I think will give you pleasure; for my own
 ‘ part, my modesty, or my vanity, must be silent.

‘ P.S. If you could spare it for an hour in the even-
 ‘ ing, I wish you to send it up to Mrs. Leigh, your
 ‘ neighbour, at the London Hotel, Albemarle-street.’

LETTER 189.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ July 23rd, 1814.

‘ I am sorry to say that the print‡ is by no means
 ‘ approved of by those who have seen it, who are pretty
 ‘ conversant with the original, as well as the picture
 ‘ from whence it is taken. I rather suspect that it is
 ‘ from the *copy*, and not the *exhibited* portrait, and in
 ‘ this dilemma would recommend a suspension, if not
 ‘ an abandonment, of the *prefixion* to the volumes which
 ‘ you purpose inflicting upon the public.

‘ With regard to *Lara*, don’t be in any hurry. I
 ‘ have not yet made up my mind on the subject, nor
 ‘ know what to think or do till I hear from you; and

* In a note which I wrote to him, before starting, next day, I find the following:—‘ I got Lara at three o’clock this morning—read him before I slept, and was enraptured. I take the proofs with me.’

† He here refers to an article in the number of the Edinburgh Review, just then published (No. 45), on the Corsair and Bride of Abydos.

‡ An engraving by Agar from Phillips’s portrait of him.

‘ Mr. Moore appeared to me in a similar state of inde-
 ‘ termination. I do not know that it may not be better
 ‘ to *reserve* it for the *entire* publication you proposed,
 ‘ and not adventure in hardy singleness, or even backed
 ‘ by the fairy Jacqueline. I have been seized with
 ‘ all kinds of doubts, &c. &c. since I left London.

‘ Pray let me hear from you, and believe me, &c.’

LETTER 190.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ July 24th, 1814.

‘ The minority must, in this case, carry it, so pray
 ‘ let it be so, for I don’t care sixpence for any of the
 ‘ opinions you mention, on such a subject; and P * *
 ‘ must be a dunce to agree with them. For my own
 ‘ part, I have no objection at all; but Mrs. Leigh and
 ‘ my cousin must be better judges of the likeness than
 ‘ others; and they hate it; and so I won’t have it
 ‘ at all.

‘ Mr. Hobhouse is right as for his conclusion; but I
 ‘ deny the premises. The name only is Spanish*; the
 ‘ country is not Spain, but the Morea.

‘ Waverley is the best and most interesting novel I
 ‘ have redde since—I don’t know when. I like it as
 ‘ much as I hate * *, and * *, and * *, and all the femi-
 ‘ nine trash of the last four months. Besides, it is all
 ‘ easy to me, I have been in Scotland so much (though
 ‘ then young enough too), and feel at home with the
 ‘ people, Lowland and Gael.

‘ A note will correct what Mr. Hobhouse thinks an
 ‘ error (about the feudal system in Spain);—it is *not*
 ‘ Spain. If he puts a few words of prose anywhere,
 ‘ it will set all right.

‘ I have been ordered to town to vote. I shall dis-

* Alluding to Lara.

‘ obey. There is no good in so much prating, since
‘ “ certain issues strokes should arbitrate.” If you
‘ have anything to say, let me hear from you.

‘ Yours, &c.’

LETTER 191.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ August 3d, 1814.

‘ It is certainly a little extraordinary that you have
‘ not sent the Edinburgh Review, as I requested, and
‘ hoped it would not require a note a day to remind
‘ you. I see *advertisements* of Lara and Jacqueline;
‘ pray, *why?* when I requested you to postpone publi-
‘ cation till my return to town.

‘ I have a most amusing epistle from the Ettrick
‘ bard—Hogg; in which, speaking of his bookseller,
‘ whom he denominates the “ shabbiest ” of the *trade*
‘ for not “ lifting his bills,” he adds, in so many words,
‘ “ G—d d—n him and them both.” This is a pretty
‘ prelude to asking you to adopt him (the said Hogg);
‘ but this he wishes; and if you please, you and I will
‘ talk it over. He has a poem ready for the press (and
‘ your *bills* too, if “ *liftable* ”), and bestows some bene-
‘ dictions on Mr. Moore for his abduction of Lara from
‘ the forthcoming Miscellany*.

‘ P.S. Sincerely, I think Mr. Hogg would suit you
‘ very well; and surely he is a man of great powers,
‘ and deserving of encouragement. I must knock out
‘ a Tale for him, and you should at all events consider
‘ before you reject his suit. Scott is gone to the Ork-

* Mr. Hogg had been led to hope that he should be permitted to insert this Poem in a Miscellany which he had at this time some thoughts of publishing; and whatever advice I may have given against such a mode of disposing of the work arose certainly not from any ill-will to this ingenious and remarkable man, but from a consideration of what I thought most advantageous to the fame of Lord Byron.

‘ neys in a gale of wind ; and Hogg says that, during
 ‘ the said gale, “ he is sure that Scott is not quite at
 ‘ his ease, to say the best of it.” Ah ! I wish these
 ‘ home-keeping bards could taste a Mediterranean
 ‘ white squall, or the Gut in a gale of wind, or even
 ‘ the Bay of Biscay with no wind at all.’

LETTER 192.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *Hastings, August 3d, 1814.*

‘ By the time this reaches your dwelling, I shall
 ‘ (God wot) be in town again probably. I have been
 ‘ here renewing my acquaintance with my old friend
 ‘ Ocean; and I find his bosom as pleasant a pillow for
 ‘ an hour in the morning as his daughters of Paphos
 ‘ could be in the twilight. I have been swimming and
 ‘ eating turbot, and smuggling neat brandies and silk
 ‘ handkerchiefs,—and listening to my friend Hodgson’s
 ‘ raptures about a pretty wife-elect of his,—and walk-
 ‘ ing on cliffs, and tumbling down hills, and making
 ‘ the most of the “ dolce far-niente ” for the last fort-
 ‘ night. I met a son of Lord Erskine’s, who says he
 ‘ has been married a year, and is the “ happiest of
 ‘ men ;” and I have met the aforesaid H., who is also
 ‘ the “ happiest of men ;” so, it is worth while being
 ‘ here, if only to witness the superlative felicity of
 ‘ these foxes, who have cut off their tails, and would
 ‘ persuade the rest to part with their brushes to keep
 ‘ them in countenance.

‘ It rejoiceth me that you like “ Lara.” Jeffrey is
 ‘ out with his 45th Number, which I suppose you have
 ‘ got. He is only too kind to me, in my share of it,
 ‘ and I begin to fancy myself a golden pheasant, upon
 ‘ the strength of the plumage wherewith he hath
 ‘ bedecked me. But then, “ surgit amari,” &c.—the

‘ gentlemen of the Champion, and Perry, have got
‘ hold (I know not how) of the condolatory address
‘ to Lady J. on the picture-abduction by our R * * *,
‘ and have published them—with my name, too, smack
‘ —without even asking leave, or inquiring whether
‘ or no! D—n their impudence, and d—n everything.
‘ It has put me out of patience, and so, I shall say no
‘ more about it.

‘ You shall have Lara and Jacque (both with some
‘ additions) when out; but I am still demurring and
‘ delaying, and in a fuss, and so is R. in his way.

‘ Newstead is to be mine again. Claughton forfeits
‘ twenty-five thousand pounds; but that don’t prevent
‘ me from being very prettily ruined. I mean to bury
‘ myself there—and let my beard grow—and hate you
‘ all.

‘ Oh! I have had the most amusing letter from Hogg,
‘ the Ettrick minstrel and shepherd. He wants me to
‘ recommend him to Murray; and, speaking of his
‘ present bookseller, whose “bills” are never “lifted,”
‘ he adds, *totidem verbis*, “God d—n him and them
‘ both.” I laughed, and so would you too, at the way
‘ in which this execration is introduced. The said
‘ Hogg is a strange being, but of great, though un-
‘ couth, powers. I think very highly of him, as a
‘ poet; but he, and half of these Scotch and Lake
‘ troubadours, are spoilt by living in little circles and
‘ petty societies. London and the world is the only
‘ place to take the conceit out of a man—in the milling
‘ phrase. Scott, he says, is gone to the Orkneys in a
‘ gale of wind;—during which wind, he affirms, the
‘ said Scott, “he is sure, is not at his ease,—to say
‘ the best of it.” Lord, Lord, if these homekeeping
‘ minstrels had crossed your Atlantic or my Mediterra-

‘ nean, and tasted a little open boating in a white
‘ squall—or a gale in “ the Gut ”—or the “ Bay of
‘ Biscay,” with no gale at all—how it would enliven
‘ and introduce them to a few of the sensations!—to
‘ say nothing of an illicit amour or two upon shore, in
‘ the way of essay upon the Passions, beginning with
‘ simple adultery, and compounding it as they went
‘ along.

‘ I have forwarded your letter to Murray,—by the
‘ way, you had addressed it to *Miller*. Pray write to
‘ me, and say what art thou doing? “ Not finished ! ”
‘ —Oons ! how is this?—these “ flaws and starts ”
‘ must be “ authorised by your grandam,” and are
‘ unbecoming of any other author. I was sorry to
‘ hear of your discrepancy with the * * s, or rather,
‘ your abjuration of agreement. I don’t want to be
‘ impertinent, or buffoon on a serious subject, and am
‘ therefore at a loss what to say.

‘ I hope nothing will induce you to abate from the
‘ proper price of your poem, as long as there is a pros-
‘ pect of getting it. For my own part, I have *seriously*,
‘ and *not whiningly* (for that is not my way—at least,
‘ it used not to be), neither hopes, nor prospects, and
‘ scarcely even wishes. I am, in some respects, happy,
‘ but not in a manner that can or ought to last,—but
‘ enough of that. The worst of it is, I feel quite ener-
‘ vated and indifferent. I really do not know, if Jupiter
‘ were to offer me my choice of the contents of his
‘ benevolent cask, what I would pick out of it. If I
‘ was born, as the nurses say, with a “ silver spoon in
‘ my mouth,” it has stuck in my throat, and spoiled my
‘ palate, so that nothing put into it is swallowed with
‘ much relish,—unless it be cayenne. However, I
‘ have grievances enough to occupy me that way too;

‘ —but for fear of adding to yours by this pestilent long
‘ diatribe, I postpone the reading of them, *sine die*.

‘ Ever, dear M., yours, &c.

‘ P.S. Don’t forget my godson. You could not
‘ have fixed on a fitter porter for his sins than me,
‘ being used to carry double without inconvenience.’

LETTER 193.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ August 4th, 1814.

‘ Not having received the slightest answer to my
‘ last three letters, nor the book (the last number of
‘ the Edinburgh Review) which they requested, I pre-
‘ sume that you were the unfortunate person who
‘ perished in the pagoda on Monday last, and address
‘ this rather to your executors than yourself, regretting
‘ that you should have had the ill luck to be the sole
‘ victim on that joyous occasion.

‘ I beg leave, then, to inform these gentlemen (who-
‘ ever they may be) that I am a little surprised at the
‘ previous neglect of the deceased, and also at ob-
‘ serving an advertisement of an approaching publica-
‘ tion on Saturday next, against the which I protested,
‘ and do protest, for the present.

‘ Yours (or theirs), &c.

‘ B.’

LETTER 194.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ August 5th, 1814.

‘ The Edinburgh Review is arrived—thanks. I
‘ enclose Mr. Hobhouse’s letter, from which you will
‘ perceive the work you have made. However, I have
‘ done : you must send my rhymes to the devil your
‘ own way. It seems, also, that the “faithful and
‘ spirited likeness” is another of your publications. I

‘ wish you joy of it; but it is no likeness—that is the
 ‘ point. Seriously, if I have delayed your journey to
 ‘ Scotland, I am sorry that you carried your complai-
 ‘ sance so far; particularly as upon trifles you have a
 ‘ more summary method;—witness the grammar of
 ‘ Hobhouse’s “bit of prose,” which has put him and
 ‘ me into a fever.

‘ Hogg must translate his own words: “*lifting*” is
 ‘ a quotation from his letter, together with “God
 ‘ d—n,” &c., which I suppose requires no translation.

‘ I was unaware of the contents of Mr. Moore’s
 ‘ letter; I think your offer very handsome, but of that
 ‘ you and he must judge. If he can get more, you
 ‘ won’t wonder that he should accept it.

‘ Out with Lara, since it must be. The tome looks
 ‘ pretty enough—on the outside. I shall be in town
 ‘ next week, and in the meantime wish you a pleasant
 ‘ journey.

‘ Yours, &c.’

LETTER 195.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ August 12th, 1814.

‘ I was *not* alone, nor will be while I can help it.
 ‘ Newstead is not yet decided. Claughton is to make
 ‘ a grand effort by Saturday week to complete,—if
 ‘ not, he must give up twenty-five thousand pounds,
 ‘ and the estate, with expenses, &c. &c. If I resume
 ‘ the Abbacy, you shall have due notice, and a cell
 ‘ set apart for your reception, with a pious welcome.
 ‘ Rogers I have not seen, but Larry and Jacky came out
 ‘ a few days ago. Of their effect I know nothing.

‘ There is something very amusing in *your* being an
 ‘ Edinburgh Reviewer. You know, I suppose, that
 ‘ T * * is none of the placidest, and may possibly enact

‘ some tragedy on being told that he is only a fool.
‘ If, now, Jeffrey were to be slain on account of an
‘ article of yours, there would be a fine conclusion.
‘ For my part, as Mrs. Winifred Jenkins says, “he
‘ has done the handsome thing by me,” particularly in
‘ his last number; so, he is the best of men and the
‘ ablest of critics, and I won’t have him killed,—though
‘ I dare say many wish he were, for being so good-
‘ humoured.

‘ Before I left Hastings I got in a passion with an
‘ ink-bottle, which I flung out of the window one night
‘ with a vengeance;—and what then? Why, next
‘ morning I was horrified by seeing that it had struck;
‘ and split upon, the petticoat of Euterpe’s graven
‘ image in the garden, and grimed her as if it were on
‘ purpose*. Only think of my distress,—and the epi-
‘ grams that might be engendered on the Muse and
‘ her misadventure.

‘ I had an adventure, almost as ridiculous, at some
‘ private theatricals near Cambridge—though of a dif-
‘ ferent description—since I saw you last. I quar-
‘ relled with a man in the dark for asking me who I
‘ was (insolently enough, to be sure), and followed
‘ him into the green-room (a *stable*) in a rage, amongst
‘ a set of people I never saw before. He turned out
‘ to be a low comedian, engaged to act with the ama-
‘ teurs, and to be a civil-spoken man enough, when he
‘ found out that nothing very pleasant was to be got

* His servant had brought him up a large jar of ink, into which, not supposing it to be full, he had thrust his pen down to the very bottom. Enraged, on finding it come out all smeared with ink, he flung the bottle out of the window into the garden, where it lighted, as here described, upon one of eight leaden Muses, that had been imported, some time before, from Holland,—the ninth having been, by some accident, left behind.

‘ by rudeness. But you would have been amused
 ‘ with the row, and the dialogue, and the dress—or
 ‘ rather the undress—of the party, where I had intro-
 ‘ duced myself in a devil of a hurry, and the astonish-
 ‘ ment that ensued. I had gone out of the theatre,
 ‘ for coolness, into the garden;—there I had tumbled
 ‘ over some dogs, and, coming away from them in very
 ‘ ill-humour, encountered the man in a worse, which
 ‘ produced all this confusion.

‘ Well—and why don’t you “launch!”—Now is
 ‘ your time. The people are tolerably tired with me,
 ‘ and not very much enamoured of * *, who has just
 ‘ spawned a quarto of metaphysical blank verse, which
 ‘ is nevertheless only a part of a poem.

‘ Murray talks of divorcing Larry and Jacky—a bad
 ‘ sign for the authors, who, I suppose, will be divorced
 ‘ too, and throw the blame upon one another. Seriously;
 ‘ I don’t care a cigar about it, and I don’t see why Sam
 ‘ should.

‘ Let me hear from and of you and my godson. If
 ‘ a daughter, the name will do quite as well.

‘ Ever, &c.’

LETTER 196.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ August 13th, 1814.

‘ I wrote yesterday to Mayfield, and have just now
 ‘ enfranked your letter to mamma. My stay in town
 ‘ is so uncertain (not later than next week) that your
 ‘ packets for the north may not reach me; and as I
 ‘ know not exactly where I am going—however, *New-*
 ‘ *stead* is my most probable destination, and if you
 ‘ send your despatches before Tuesday, I can forward
 ‘ them to our new ally. But, after that day, you had
 ‘ better not trust to their arrival in time.

‘ * * has been exiled from Paris, *on dit*, for saying
 ‘ the Bourbons were old women. The Bourbons
 ‘ might have been content, I think, with returning the
 ‘ compliment.

‘ I told you all about Jacky and Larry yesterday;—
 ‘ they are to be separated,—at least, so says the grand
 ‘ M., and I know no more of the matter. Jeffrey has
 ‘ done me more than “justice;” but as to tragedy—
 ‘ um!—I have no time for fiction at present. A man
 ‘ cannot paint a storm with the vessel under bare
 ‘ poles, on a lee-shore. When I get to land, I will
 ‘ try what is to be done, and, if I founder, there
 ‘ be plenty of mine elders and betters to console Mel-
 ‘ pomene.

‘ When at Newstead, you must come over, if only
 ‘ for a day—should Mrs. M. be *exigeante* of your pre-
 ‘ sence. The place is worth seeing, as a ruin, and I
 ‘ can assure you there *was* some fun there, even in my
 ‘ time; but that is past. The ghosts*, however, and
 ‘ the gothics, and the waters, and the desolation, make
 ‘ it very lively still.

‘ Ever, dear Tom, yours, &c.’

* It was, if I mistake not, during his recent visit to Newstead, that he himself actually fancied he saw the ghost of the Black Friar, which was supposed to have haunted the Abbey from the time of the dissolution of the monasteries, and which he thus describes, from the recollection perhaps of his own fantasy, in Don Juan:—

‘ It was no mouse, but, lo! a monk, array’d
 ‘ In cowl and beads and dusky garb, appear’d,
 ‘ Now in the moonlight, and now lapsed in shade,
 ‘ With steps that trod as heavy, yet unheard:
 ‘ His garments only a slight murmur made;
 ‘ He moved as shadowy as the sisters weird,
 ‘ But slowly; and as he pass’d Juan by,
 ‘ Glanced, without pausing, on him a bright eye.’

It is said, that the Newstead ghost appeared, also, to Lord Byron’s cousin, Miss Fanny Parkins, and that she made a sketch of him from memory.

LETTER 197.

TO MR. MURRAY.

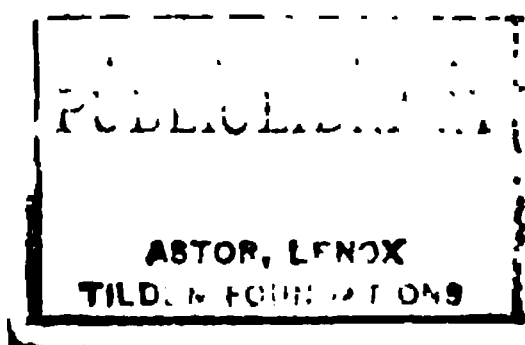
Newstead Abbey, September 2nd, 1814.

‘ I am obliged by what you have sent, but would
 ‘ rather not see anything of the kind* ; we have had
 ‘ enough of these things already, good and bad, and
 ‘ next month you need not trouble yourself to collect
 ‘ even the *higher* generation—on my account. It gives
 ‘ me much pleasure to hear of Mr. Hobhouse’s and
 ‘ Mr. Merivale’s good entreatment by the journals you
 ‘ mention.

‘ I still think Mr. Hogg and yourself might make
 ‘ out an alliance. *Dodsley’s* was, I believe, the last
 ‘ decent thing of the kind, and *his* had great success
 ‘ in its day, and lasted several years ; but then he had
 ‘ the double advantage of editing and publishing.
 ‘ The Spleen, and several of *Gray’s* odes, much of
 ‘ *Shenstone*, and many others of good repute, made their
 ‘ first appearance in his collection. Now, with the
 ‘ support of Scott, Wordsworth, Southey, &c., I see
 ‘ little reason why you should not do as well ; and if
 ‘ once fairly established, you would have assistance
 ‘ from the youngsters, I dare say. Stratford Canning
 ‘ (whose “ *Buonaparte* ” is excellent), and many others,
 ‘ and Moore, and Hobhouse, and I, would try a fall
 ‘ now and then (if permitted), and you might coax
 ‘ Campbell, too, into it. By the by, *he* has an unpub-
 ‘ lished (though printed) poem on a scene in Germany
 ‘ (Bavaria, I think), which I saw last year, that is per-
 ‘ fectly magnificent, and equal to himself. I wonder
 ‘ he don’t publish it.

‘ Oh !—do you recollect S * *, the engraver’s, mad
 ‘ letter about not engraving Phillips’s picture of Lord
 ‘ *Foley* ? (as he blundered it) ; well, I have traced it,

* The reviews and magazines of the month.



‘ I think. It seems, by the papers, a preacher of
 ‘ Johanna Southcote’s is named *Foley* ; and I can no
 ‘ way account for the said S**’s confusion of words
 ‘ and ideas, but by that of his head’s running on Johanna
 ‘ and her apostles. It was a mercy he did not say
 ‘ Lord *Tozer*. You know, of course, that S** is a
 ‘ believer in this new (old) virgin of spiritual impreg-
 ‘ nation.

‘ I long to know what she will produce* ; her being
 ‘ with child at sixty-five is indeed a miracle, but her
 ‘ getting any one to beget it, a greater.

‘ If you were not going to Paris or Scotland, I could
 ‘ send you some game : if you remain, let me know.

‘ P.S. A word or two of “Lara,” which your en-
 ‘ closure brings before me. It is of no great promise
 ‘ separately ; but, as connected with the other tales, it
 ‘ will do very well for the volumes you mean to pub-
 ‘ lish. I would recommend this arrangement—Childe
 ‘ Harold, the smaller Poems, Giaour, Bride, Corsair,
 ‘ Lara ; the last completes the series, and its very like-
 ‘ ness renders it necessary to the others. Cawthorne
 ‘ writes that they are publishing *English Bards* in
 ‘ *Ireland* : pray inquire into this ; because *it must* be
 ‘ stopped.’

LETTER 198.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Newstead Abbey, September 7th, 1814.*

‘ I should think Mr. Hogg, for his own sake as
 ‘ well as yours, would be “critical” as Iago himself in
 ‘ his editorial capacity ; and that such a publication

* The following characteristic note, in reference to this passage, ap-
 pears, in Mr. Gifford’s hand-writing, on the copy of the above letter :—
 ‘ It is a pity that Lord B. was ignorant of Jonson. The old poet has a
 ‘ Satire on the Court Pucelle that would have supplied him with some
 ‘ pleasantry on Johanna’s pregnancy.’

‘ would answer his purpose, and yours too, with tolerable management. You should, however, have a good number to start with—I mean, *good* in quality; in these days, there can be little fear of not coming up to the mark in quantity. There must be many “fine things” in Wordsworth; but I should think it difficult to make *six* quartos (the amount of the whole) all fine, particularly the pedlar’s portion of the poem; but there can be no doubt of his powers to do almost anything.

‘ I *am* “very idle.” I have read the few books I had with me, and been forced to fish, for lack of argument. I have caught a great many perch and some carp, which is a comfort, as one would not lose one’s labour willingly.

‘ Pray, who corrects the press of your volumes? I hope “The Corsair” is printed from the copy I corrected, with the additional lines in the first Canto, and some *notes* from Sismondi and Lavater, which I gave you to add thereto. The arrangement is very well.

‘ My cursed people have not sent my papers since Sunday, and I have lost Johanna’s divorce from Jupiter. Who hath gotten her with prophet? Is it Sharpe and how? * * * I should like to buy one of her seals: if salvation can be had at half-a-guinea a head, the landlord of the Crown and Anchor should be ashamed of himself for charging double for tickets to a mere terrestrial banquet. I am afraid, seriously, that these matters will lend a sad handle to your profane scoffers, and give a loose to much damnable laughter.

‘ I have not seen Hunt’s Sonnets nor Descent of Liberty: he has chosen a pretty place wherein to

‘ compose the last. Let me hear from you before you
‘ embark. Ever, &c.’

LETTER 199.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *Newstead Abbey, September 15th, 1814.*

‘ This is the fourth letter I have begun to you
‘ within the month. Whether I shall finish or not, or
‘ burn it like the rest, I know not. When we meet, I
‘ will explain *why* I have not written—*why* I have not
‘ asked you here, as I wished—with a great many
‘ other *whys* and wherefores, which will keep cold.
‘ In short, you must excuse all my seeming omissions
‘ and commissions, and grant me more remission than
‘ St. Athanasius will to yourself, if you lop off a
‘ single shred of mystery from his pious puzzle. It
‘ is my creed (and it may be St. Athanasius’s too)
‘ that your article on T** will get somebody killed,
‘ and *that*, on the *Saints*, get him d—d afterwards,
‘ which will be quite enow for one number. Oons,
‘ Tom! you must not meddle just now with the incom-
‘ prehensible; for if Johanna Southcote turns out to
‘ be * * *

‘ Now for a little egotism. My affairs stand thus.
‘ To-morrow, I shall know whether a circumstance of
‘ importance enough to change many of my plans will
‘ occur or not. If it does not, I am off for Italy next
‘ month, and London, in the mean time, next week.
‘ I have got back Newstead and twenty-five thousand
‘ pounds (out of twenty-eight paid already),—as a
‘ “sacrifice,” the late purchaser calls it, and he may
‘ choose his own name. I have paid some of my debts,
‘ and contracted others; but I have a few thousand
‘ pounds, which I can’t spend after my own heart in
‘ this climate, and so, I shall go back to the south,

‘ Hobhouse, I think and hope, will go with me ; but,
‘ whether he will or not, I shall. I want to see Venice,
‘ and the Alps, and Parmesan cheeses, and look at the
‘ coast of Greece, or rather Epirus, from Italy, as I
‘ once did—or fancied I did—that of Italy, when off
‘ Corfu. All this, however, depends upon an event,
‘ which may, or may not happen. Whether it will, I
‘ shall know probably to-morrow, and, if it does, I
‘ can’t well go abroad at present.

‘ Pray pardon this parenthetical scrawl. You shall
‘ hear from me again soon ;—I don’t call this an an-
‘ swer. ‘ Ever most affectionately, &c.’

The ‘ circumstance of importance,’ to which he alludes in this letter, was his second proposal for Miss Milbanke, of which he was now waiting the result. His own account, in his Memoranda, of the circumstances that led to this step is, in substance, as far as I can trust my recollection, as follows. A person, who had for some time stood high in his affection and confidence, observing how cheerless and unsettled was the state both of his mind and prospects, advised him strenuously to marry ; and, after much discussion, he consented. The next point for consideration was—who was to be the object of his choice ; and while his friend mentioned one lady, he himself named Miss Milbanke. To this, however, his adviser strongly objected,—remarking to him, that Miss Milbanke had at present no fortune, and that his embarrassed affairs would not allow him to marry without one ; that she was, moreover, a learned lady, which would not at all suit him. In consequence of these representations, he agreed that his friend should write a proposal for him to the other lady named, which was accordingy

done;—and an answer, containing a refusal, arrived as they were, one morning, sitting together. ‘You see,’ said Lord Byron, ‘that, after all, Miss Milbanke is to be the person;—I will write to her.’ He accordingly wrote on the moment, and, as soon as he had finished, his friend, remonstrating still strongly against his choice, took up the letter,—but, on reading it over, observed, ‘Well, really, this is a very pretty letter;—it is a pity it should not go. I never read a prettier one.’ ‘Then it *shall* go,’ said Lord Byron, and in so saying, sealed and sent off, on the instant, this fiat of his fate.

LETTER 200.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘*Nd.*, September 15th, 1814.

‘I have written to you one letter to-night, but must send you this much more, as I have not franked my number, to say that I rejoice in my god-daughter, and will send her a coral and bells, which I hope she will accept, the moment I get back to London.

‘My head is at this moment in a state of confusion, from various causes, which I can neither describe nor explain—but let that pass. My employments have been very rural—fishing, shooting, bathing, and boating. Books I have but few here, and those I have read ten times over, till sick of them. So, I have taken to breaking soda-water bottles with my pistols, and jumping into the water, and rowing over it, and firing at the fowls of the air. But why should I “monster my nothings” to you, who are well employed, and happily too, I should hope. For my part, I am happy too, in my way—but, as usual, have contrived to get into three or four perplexities, which I do not see my way through. But a few days, perhaps a day, will determine one of them.

‘ You do not say a word to me of your Poem. I
 ‘ wish I could see or hear it. I neither could, nor
 ‘ would, do it or its author any harm. I believe I told
 ‘ you of Larry and Jacquy. A friend of mine was
 ‘ reading—at least a friend of his was reading—said
 ‘ Larry and Jacquy in a Brighton coach. A passenger
 ‘ took up the book and queried as to the author. The
 ‘ proprietor said “ there were *two* ”—to which the
 ‘ answer of the unknown was, “ Ay, ay—a joint con-
 ‘ cern, I suppose, *summot* like Sternhold and Hop-
 ‘ kins.”

‘ Is not this excellent? I would not have missed the
 ‘ “ vile comparison ” to have scaped being one of the
 ‘ “ Arcades ambo et cantare pares.” Good night.
 ‘ Again yours.’

LETTER 201.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *Newstead Abbey, Sept. 20th, 1814.*

‘ Here's to her who long
 ‘ Hath waked the poet's sigh!
 ‘ The girl who gave to song
 ‘ What gold could never buy.—My dear Moore,
 ‘ I am going to be married—that is, I am accepted*,
 ‘ and one usually hopes the rest will follow. My mother
 ‘ of the Gracchi (that *are* to be) *you* think too strait-
 ‘ laced for me, although the paragon of only children,
 ‘ and invested with “ golden opinions of all sorts of
 ‘ men,” and full of “ most blest conditions ” as Desde-
 ‘ mona herself. Miss Milbanke is the lady, and I

* On the day of the arrival of the lady's answer, he was sitting at dinner, when his gardener came in and presented him with his mother's wedding ring, which she had lost many years before, and which the gardener had just found in digging up the mould under her window. Almost at the same moment, the letter from Miss Milbanke arrived, and Lord Byron exclaimed, ‘ If it contains a consent, I will be married with this ‘ very ring.’ It *did* contain a very flattering acceptance of his proposal, and a duplicate of the letter had been sent to London, in case this should have missed him.—*Memoranda.*

‘ have her father’s invitation to proceed there in my
‘ elect capacity,—which, however, I cannot do till I
‘ have settled some business in London, and got a blue
‘ coat.

‘ She is said to be an heiress, but of that I really
‘ know nothing certainly, and shall not inquire. But
‘ I do know, that she has talents and excellent quali-
‘ ties; and you will not deny her judgment, after
‘ having refused six suitors and taken me.

‘ Now, if you have anything to say against this,
‘ pray do; my mind’s made up, positively fixed, deter-
‘ mined, and therefore I will listen to reason, because
‘ now it can do no harm. Things may occur to break
‘ it off, but I will hope not. In the mean time, I tell
‘ you (*a secret*, by the by,—at least, till I know she
‘ wishes it to the public) that I have proposed and am
‘ accepted. You need not be in a hurry to wish me
‘ joy, for one mayn’t be married for months. I am
‘ going to town to-morrow; but expect to be here, on
‘ my way there, within a fortnight.

‘ If this had not happened, I should have gone to
‘ Italy. In my way down, perhaps, you will meet me
‘ at Nottingham, and come over with me here. I need
‘ not say that nothing will give me greater pleasure.
‘ I must, of course, reform thoroughly; and, seriously,
‘ if I can contribute to her happiness, I shall secure
‘ my own. She is so good a person, that—that—in
‘ short, I wish I was a better. Ever, &c.’

LETTER 202. TO THE COUNTESS OF * * *.

‘ Albany, October 5th, 1814.

‘ Dear Lady * *,

‘ Your recollection and invitation do me great
‘ honour; but I am going to be “married, and can’t
‘ come.” My intended is two hundred miles off, and

‘ the moment my business here is arranged, I must set
‘ out in a great hurry to be happy. Miss Milbanke is
‘ the good-natured person who has undertaken me,
‘ and, of course, I am very much in love, and as silly
‘ as all single gentlemen must be in that sentimental
‘ situation. I have been accepted these three weeks;
‘ but when the event will take place, I don’t exactly
‘ know. It depends partly upon lawyers, who are
‘ never in a hurry. One can be sure of nothing; but,
‘ at present, there appears no other interruption to
‘ this intention, which seems as mutual as possible, and
‘ now no secret, though I did not tell first,—and
‘ all our relatives are congratulating away to right and
‘ left in the most fatiguing manner.

‘ You perhaps know the lady. She is niece to Lady
‘ Melbourne, and cousin to Lady Cowper and others
‘ of your acquaintance, and has no fault, except being
‘ a great deal too good for me, and that *I* must pardon,
‘ if nobody else should. It might have been *two* years
‘ ago, and, if it had, would have saved me a world of
‘ trouble. She has employed the interval in refusing
‘ about half a dozen of my particular friends (as she
‘ did me once, by the way), and has taken me at last,
‘ for which I am very much obliged to her. I wish it
‘ was well over, for I do hate bustle, and there is no
‘ marrying without some;—and then, I must not marry
‘ in a black coat, they tell me, and I can’t bear a blue
‘ one.

‘ Pray forgive me for scribbling all this nonsense.
‘ You know I must be serious all the rest of my life,
‘ and this is a parting piece of buffoonery, which I
‘ write with tears in my eyes, expecting to be agitated.
‘ Believe me most seriously and sincerely your obliged
‘ servant,

‘ BYRON.’

‘ P.S. My best rems. to Lord * * on his return.’

LETTER 203.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ October 7th, 1814. .

‘ Notwithstanding the contradictory paragraph in
‘ the Morning Chronicle, which must have been sent
‘ by * *, or perhaps—I know not why I should suspect
‘ Claughton of such a thing, and yet I partly do, be-
‘ cause it might interrupt his renewal of purchase, if
‘ so disposed; in short, it matters not, but we are all
‘ in the road to matrimony—lawyers settling, relations
‘ congratulating, my intended as kind as heart could
‘ wish, and every one, whose opinion I value, very
‘ glad of it. All her relatives, and all mine too, seem
‘ equally pleased.

‘ Perry was very sorry, and has *re-contradicted*, as
‘ you will perceive by this day’s paper. It was, to be
‘ sure, a devil of an insertion; since the first paragraph
‘ came from Sir Ralph’s own County Journal, and this
‘ in the teeth of it would appear to him and his as *my*
‘ denial. But I have written to do away that, enclosing
‘ Perry’s letter, which was very polite and kind.

‘ Nobody hates bustle so much as I do; but there
‘ seems a fatality over every scene of my drama, always
‘ a row of some sort or other. No matter—Fortune is
‘ my best friend, and as I acknowledge my obligations
‘ to her, I hope she will treat me better than she treated
‘ the Athenian, who took some merit to *himself* on
‘ some occasion, but (after that) took no more towns.
‘ In fact, *she*, that exquisite goddess, has hitherto car-
‘ ried me through everything, and will, I hope, now;
‘ since I own it will be all *her* doing.

‘ Well, now for thee. Your article on * * is perfec-
‘ tion itself. You must not leave off reviewing. By
‘ Jove, I believe you can do anything. There is wit,
‘ and taste, and learning, and good-humour (though

‘ not a whit less severe for that) in every line of that
‘ critique.

‘ Next to *your* being an E. Reviewer, *my* being of
‘ the same kidney, and Jeffrey’s being such a friend to
‘ both, are amongst the events which I conceive were
‘ not calculated upon in Mr.—what’s his name?’s—
‘ “ Essay on Probabilities.”

‘ But, Tom, I say—Oons! Scott menaces the “ Lord
‘ of the Isles.” Do you mean to compete? or lay by,
‘ till this wave has broke upon the *shelves* (of book-
‘ sellers, not rocks—a *broken* metaphor, by the way).
‘ You *ought* to be afraid of nobody; but your modesty
‘ is really as provoking and unnecessary as a * *’s. I
‘ am very merry, and have just been writing some
‘ elegiac stanzas on the death of Sir P. Parker. He
‘ was my first cousin, but never met since boyhood.
‘ Our relations desired me, and I have scribbled and
‘ given it to Perry, who will chronicle it to-morrow.
‘ I am as sorry for him as one could be for one I never
‘ saw since I was a child; but should not have wept
‘ melodiously, except “ at the request of friends.”

‘ I hope to get out of town and be married, but I
‘ shall take Newstead in my way, and you must meet
‘ me at Nottingham and accompany me to mine Abbey.
‘ I will tell you the day when I know it.

‘ Ever, &c.

‘ P.S. By the way, my wife elect is perfection, and
‘ I hear of nothing but her merits and her wonders,
‘ and that she is “ very pretty.” Her expectations, I
‘ am told, are great; but *what*, I have not asked. I
‘ have not seen her these ten months.’

LETTER 204.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ October 15th, 1814.

‘ An’ there were anything in marriage that would
‘ make a difference between my friends and me, par-
‘ ticularly in your case, I would “none on’t.” My
‘ agent sets off for Durham next week, and I shall
‘ follow him, taking Newstead and you in my way. I
‘ certainly did not address Miss Milbanke with these
‘ views, but it is likely she may prove a considerable
‘ *parti*. All her father can give, or leave her, he will;
‘ and from her childless uncle, Lord Wentworth, whose
‘ barony, it is supposed, will devolve on Ly. Milbanke
‘ (her sister), she has expectations. But these will
‘ depend upon his own disposition, which seems very
‘ partial towards her. She is an only child, and Sir R.’s
‘ estates, though dipped by electioneering, are consider-
‘ able. Part of them are settled on her; but whether
‘ *that* will be *dowered* now, I do not know,—though,
‘ from what has been intimated to me, it probably will.
‘ The lawyers are to settle this among them, and I am
‘ getting my property into matrimonial array, and
‘ myself ready for the journey to Seaham, which I
‘ must make in a week or ten days.

‘ I certainly did not dream that she was attached to
‘ me, which it seems she has been for some time. I
‘ also thought her of a very cold disposition, in which
‘ I was also mistaken—it is a long story, and I won’t
‘ trouble you with it. As to her virtues, &c. &c. you
‘ will hear enough of them (for she is a kind of *pattern*
‘ in the north), without my running into a display on
‘ the subject. It is well that *one* of us is of such fame,
‘ since there is a sad deficit in the *morale* of that article
‘ upon my part,—all owing to my “bitch of a star,”
‘ as Captain Tranchemont says of his planet.

‘ Don’t think you have not said enough of me in
‘ your article on T * * ; what more could or need be
‘ said ?

‘ Your long-delayed and expected work—I suppose
‘ you will take fright at “ The Lord of the Isles ” and
‘ Scott now. You must do as you like,—I have said
‘ my say. You ought to fear comparison with none,
‘ and any one would stare, who heard you were so
‘ tremulous,—though, after all, I believe it is the
‘ surest sign of talent. Good morning. I hope we
‘ shall meet soon, but I will write again, and perhaps
‘ you will meet me at Nottingham. Pray say so.

‘ P. S. If this union is productive, you shall name
‘ the first fruits.’

LETTER 205. TO MR. HENRY DRURY.

‘ October 18th, 1814.

‘ My dear Drury,

‘ Many thanks for your hitherto unacknowledged
‘ “ Anecdotes.” Now for one of mine—I am going to
‘ be married, and have been engaged this month. It
‘ is a long story, and therefore, I won’t tell it,—an old
‘ and (though I did not know it till lately) a *mutual*
‘ attachment. The very sad life I have led since I
‘ was your pupil must partly account for the offs and
‘ ons in this now to be arranged business. We are
‘ only waiting for the lawyers and settlements, &c.,
‘ and next week, or the week after, I shall go down to
‘ Seaham in the new character of a regular suitor for
‘ a wife of mine own.

‘ I hope Hodgson is in a fair way on the same
‘ voyage—I saw him and his idol at Hastings. I wish
‘ he would be married at the same time,—I should
‘ like to make a party,—like people electrified in a

‘ row, by (or rather through) the same chain, holding
‘ one another’s hands, and all feeling the shock at
‘ once. I have not yet apprized him of this. He
‘ makes such a serious matter of all these things, and
‘ is so “melancholy and gentlemanlike,” that it is quite
‘ overcoming to us choice spirits.

‘ They say one shouldn’t be married in a black coat.
‘ I won’t have a blue one,—that’s flat. I hate it.

‘ Yours, &c.’

LETTER 206.

TO MR. COWELL.

‘ *October 22d, 1814.*

‘ My dear Cowell,

‘ Many and sincere thanks for your kind letter—
‘ the bet, or rather forfeit, was one hundred to Hawke,
‘ and fifty to Hay (nothing to Kelly), for a guinea
‘ received from each of the two former*. I shall feel
‘ much obliged by your setting me right if I am incor-
‘ rect in this statement in any way, and have reasons
‘ for wishing you to recollect as much as possible of
‘ what passed, and state it to Hodgson. My reason
‘ is this: some time ago Mr. * * * required a bet of
‘ me which I never made, and of course refused to pay,
‘ and have heard no more of it; to prevent similar
‘ mistakes is my object in wishing you to remember
‘ well what passed, and to put Hodgson in possession
‘ of your memory on the subject.

‘ I hope to see you soon in my way through Cam-
‘ bridge. Remember me to H., and believe me ever
‘ and truly, &c.’

Soon after the date of this letter, Lord Byron had

* He had agreed to forfeit these sums to the persons mentioned, should he ever marry.

to pay a visit to Cambridge for the purpose of voting for Mr. Clarke, who had been started by Trinity College as one of the candidates for Sir Busick Harwood's Professorship. On this occasion, a circumstance occurred which could not but be gratifying to him. As he was delivering in his vote to the Vice-Chancellor, in the Senate House, the under-graduates in the gallery ventured to testify their admiration of him by a general murmur of applause and stamping of the feet. For this breach of order, the gallery was immediately cleared by order of the Vice-Chancellor.

At the beginning of the month of December, being called up to town by business, I had opportunities, from being a good deal in my noble friend's society, of observing the state of his mind and feelings, under the prospect of the important change he was now about to undergo; and it was with pain I found that those sanguine hopes* with which I had sometimes looked forward to the happy influence of marriage, in winning him over to the brighter and better side of life, were, by a view of all the circumstances of his present destiny, considerably diminished; while, at the same time, not a few doubts and misgivings, which had never before so strongly occurred to me, with regard to his own fitness, under any circumstances, for the matrimonial tie, filled me altogether with a degree of foreboding anxiety as to his fate, which the unfortunate events that followed but too fully justified.

* I had frequently, both in earnest and in jest, expressed these hopes to him; and, in one of my letters, after touching upon some matters relative to my own little domestic circle, I added, 'This will all be unintelligible to you; though I sometimes cannot help thinking it within the range of possibility, that even *you*, volcano as you are, may, one day, cool down into something of the same *habitable* state. Indeed, when one thinks of lava having been converted into buttons for Isaac Hawkins Browne, there is no saying what such fiery things may be brought to at last.'

The truth is, I fear, that rarely, if ever, have men of the higher order of genius shown themselves fitted for the calm affections and comforts that form the cement of domestic life. ‘One misfortune (says Pope) of extraordinary geniuses is, that their very friends are more apt to admire than love them.’ To this remark there have, no doubt, been exceptions,—and I should pronounce Lord Byron, from my own experience, to be one of them,—but it would not be difficult, perhaps, to show, from the very nature and pursuits of genius, that such must generally be the lot of all pre-eminently gifted with it; and that the same qualities which enable them to command admiration are also those that too often incapacitate them from conciliating love.

The very habits, indeed, of abstraction and self-study to which the occupations of men of genius lead, are, in themselves, necessarily, of an unsocial and detaching tendency, and require a large portion of indulgence from others not to be set down as unamiable. One of the chief sources, too, of sympathy and society between ordinary mortals being their dependence on each other’s intellectual resources, the operation of this social principle must naturally be weakest in those whose own mental stores are most abundant and self-sufficing, and who, rich in such materials for thinking within themselves, are rendered so far independent of any aid from others. It was this solitary luxury (which Plato called ‘banqueting his own thoughts’) that led Pope, as well as Lord Byron, to prefer the silence and seclusion of his library to the most agreeable conversation.—And not only, too, is the necessity of commerce with other minds less felt by such persons, but, from that fastidiousness which the opulence of their

own resources generates, the society of those less gifted than themselves becomes often a restraint and burden, to which not all the charms of friendship, or even love, can reconcile them. 'Nothing is so tiresome (says the poet of Vacluse, in assigning a reason for not living with some of his dearest friends) as to converse with persons who have not the same information as oneself.'

But it is the cultivation and exercise of the imaginative faculty that, more than anything, tends to wean the man of genius from actual life, and, by substituting the sensibilities of the imagination for those of the heart, to render, at last, the medium through which he feels no less unreal than that through which he thinks. Those images of ideal good and beauty that surround him in his musings, soon accustom him to consider all that is beneath this high standard unworthy of his care ; till, at length, the heart becoming chilled as the fancy warms, it too often happens that, in proportion as he has refined and elevated his theory of all the social affections, he has unfitted himself for the practice of them*. Hence so frequently it arises that, in persons of this temperament, we see some bright but artificial idol of the brain usurp the place of all real and natural objects of tenderness. The poet Dante, a wanderer away from wife and children, passed the whole of a restless and detached life in nursing his

* Of the lamentable contrast between sentiments and conduct, which this transfer of the seat of sensibility from the heart to the fancy produces, the annals of literary men afford unluckily too many examples. Alfieri, though he could write a sonnet full of tenderness to his mother, never saw her (says Mr. W. Rose) but once after their early separation, though he frequently passed within a few miles of her residence. The poet Young, with all his parade of domestic sorrows, was, it appears, a neglectful husband and harsh father ; and Sterne (to use the words employed by Lord Byron) preferred 'whining over a dead ass to relieving a living mother.'

immortal dream of Beatrice; while Petrarch, who would not suffer his only daughter to reside beneath his roof, expended thirty-two years of poetry and passion on an idealized love.

It is, indeed, in the very nature and essence of genius to be for ever occupied intensely with Self, as the great centre and source of its strength. Like the sister Rachel, in Dante, sitting all day before her mirror,

‘ mai non si smaga
‘ Del suo ammiraglio, e siede tutto giorno.’

To this power of self-concentration, by which alone all the other powers of genius are made available, there is, of course, no such disturbing and fatal enemy as those sympathies and affections that draw the mind out actively towards others*; and, accordingly, it will be found that, among those who have felt within themselves a call to immortality, the greater number have, by a sort of instinct, kept aloof from such ties, and, instead of the softer duties and rewards of being amiable, reserved themselves for the high, hazardous chances of being great. In looking back through the lives of the most illustrious poets,—the class of intellect in which the characteristic features of genius are, perhaps, most strongly marked,—we shall find that, with scarcely one exception, from Homer down to Lord Byron, they have been, in their several degrees, restless and solitary spirits, with minds wrapped up, like silk-worms, in their own tasks, either strangers, or rebels, to domestic ties, and bearing about with

* It is the opinion of Diderot, in his Treatise on Acting, that not only in the art of which he treats, but in all those which are called imitative, the possession of real sensibility is a bar to eminence;—sensibility being, according to his view, ‘ le caractère de la bonté de l’ame et de la médiocrité du génie.’

them a deposit for posterity in their souls, to the jealous watching and enriching of which almost all other thoughts and considerations have been sacrificed.

‘ To follow poetry as one ought (says the authority* ‘ I have already quoted), one must forget father and ‘ mother and cleave to it alone.’ In these few words is pointed out the sole path that leads genius to greatness. On such terms alone are the high places of fame to be won;—nothing less than the sacrifice of the entire man can achieve them. However delightful, therefore, may be the spectacle of a man of genius tamed and domesticated in society, taking docilely upon him the yoke of the social ties, and enlightening without disturbing the sphere in which he moves, we must nevertheless, in the midst of our admiration, bear in mind that it is not thus smoothly or amiably immortality has been ever struggled for, or won. The poet thus circumstanced may be popular, may be loved; for the happiness of himself and those linked with him he is in the right road,—but not for greatness. The marks by which Fame has always separated her great martyrs from the rest of mankind are not upon him, and the crown cannot be his. He may dazzle, may captivate the circle, and even the times in which he lives, but he is not for hereafter.

To the general description here given of that high class of human intelligences to which he belonged, the character of Lord Byron was, in many respects, a signal exception. Born with strong affections and ardent passions, the world had, from first to last, too firm a

* Pope.

hold on his sympathies to let imagination altogether usurp the place of reality, either in his feelings, or in the objects of them. His life, indeed, was one continued struggle between that instinct of genius, which was for ever drawing him back into the lonely laboratory of Self, and those impulses of passion, ambition, and vanity, which again hurried him off into the crowd, and entangled him in its interests; and though it may be granted that he would have been more purely and abstractedly the *poet*, had he been less thoroughly, in all his pursuits and propensities, the *man*, yet from this very mixture and alloy has it arisen that his pages bear so deeply the stamp of real life, and that in the works of no poet, with the exception of Shakspeare, can every various mood of the mind—whether solemn or gay, whether inclined to the ludicrous or the sublime, whether seeking to divert itself with the follies of society or panting after the grandeur of solitary nature—find so readily a strain of sentiment in accordance with its every passing tone.

But while the naturally warm cast of his affections and temperament gave thus a substance and truth to his social feelings which those of too many of his fellow votaries of Genius have wanted, it was not to be expected that an imagination of such range and power should have been so early developed and unrestrainedly indulged without producing, at last, some of those effects upon the heart which have invariably been found attendant on such a predominance of this faculty. It must have been observed, indeed, that the period when his natural affections flourished most healthily was before he had yet arrived at the full consciousness of his genius,—before Imagination had yet accustomed him to those glowing pictures, after

gazing upon which all else appeared cold and colourless. From the moment of this initiation into the wonders of his own mind, a distaste for the realities of life began to grow upon him. Not even that intense craving after affection, which nature had implanted in him, could keep his ardour still alive in a pursuit whose results fell so short of his 'imaginings;' and though, from time to time, the combined warmth of his fancy and temperament was able to call up a feeling which to his eyes wore the semblance of love, it may be questioned whether his heart had ever much share in such passions, or whether, after his first launch into the boundless sea of imagination, he could ever have been brought back and fixed by any lasting attachment. Actual objects there were, in but too great number, who, as long as the illusion continued, kindled up his thoughts and were the themes of his song. But they were, after all, little more than mere dreams of the hour;—the qualities with which he invested them were almost all ideal, nor could have stood the test of a month's, or even week's cohabitation. It was but the reflection of his own bright conceptions that he saw in each new object; and while persuading himself that they furnished the models of his heroines, he was, on the contrary, but fancying that he beheld his heroines in them.

There needs no stronger proof of the predominance of imagination in these attachments than his own serious avowal, in the Journal already given, that often, when in the company of the woman he most loved, he found himself secretly wishing for the solitude of his own study. It was *there*, indeed,—in the silence and abstraction of that study,—that the chief scene of his mistress's empire and glory lay. It was there that,

unchecked by reality, and without any fear of the disenchantments of truth, he could view her through the medium of his own fervid fancy, enamour himself of an idol of his own creating, and out of a brief delirium of a few days or weeks, send forth a dream of beauty and passion through all ages.

While such appears to have been the imaginative character of his loves (of all, except the one that lived unquenched through all), his friendships, though, of course, far less subject to the influence of fancy, could not fail to exhibit also some features characteristic of the peculiar mind in which they sprung. It was a usual saying of his own, and will be found repeated in some of his letters, that he had 'no genius for friendship,' and that whatever capacity he might once have possessed for that sentiment had vanished with his youth. If in saying thus he shaped his notions of friendship according to the romantic standard of his boyhood, the fact must be admitted; but as far as the assertion was meant to imply that he had become incapable of a warm, manly, and lasting friendship, such a charge against himself was unjust, and I am not the only living testimony of its injustice.

To a certain degree, however, even in his friendships, the effects of a too vivid imagination, in disqualifying the mind for the cold contact of reality, were visible. We are told that Petrarch (who, in this respect, as in most others, may be regarded as a genuine representative of the poetic character) abstained purposely from a too frequent intercourse with his nearest friends, lest, from the sensitiveness he was so aware of in himself, there should occur anything that might chill his regard for them*; and

* See Foscolo's Essay on Petrarch. On the same principle, Orrery says, in speaking of Swift, 'I am persuaded that his distance from

though Lord Byron was of a nature too full of social and kindly impulses ever to think of such a precaution, it is a fact confirmatory, at least, of the principle on which his brother poet, Petrarch, acted, that the friends, whether of his youth or manhood, of whom he had seen least, through life, were those of whom he always thought and spoke with the most warmth and fondness. Being brought less often to the touchstone of familiar intercourse, they stood naturally a better chance of being adopted as the favourites of his imagination, and of sharing, in consequence, a portion of that bright colouring reserved for all that gave it interest and pleasure. Next to the dead, therefore, whose hold upon his fancy had been placed beyond all risk of severance, those friends whom he but saw occasionally, and by such favourable glimpses as only renewed the first kindly impression they had made, were the surest to live unchangingly, and without shadow, in his memory.

To the same cause, there is little doubt, his love for his sister owed much of its devotedness and fervour. In a mind sensitive and versatile as his, long habits of family intercourse might have estranged, or at least dulled, his natural affection for her;—but their separation, during youth, left this feeling fresh and untried*. His very inexperience in such ties made the smile of a sister no less a novelty than a charm to him, and before the first gloss of this newly awakened sentiment had time to wear off, they were again separated, and for ever.

If the portrait which I have here attempted of the

‘his English friends proved a strong incitement to their mutual affection.’

* That he was himself fully aware of this appears from a passage in one of his letters already given:—‘My sister is in town, which is a great comfort; for, never having been much together, we are naturally more attached to each other.’

general character of those gifted with high genius be allowed to bear, in any of its features, a resemblance to the originals, it can no longer, I think, be matter of question whether a class so set apart from the track of ordinary life, so removed, by their very elevation, out of the influences of our common atmosphere, are at all likely to furnish tractable subjects for that most trying of all social experiments, matrimony. In reviewing the great names of philosophy and science, we shall find that all who have most distinguished themselves in those walks have, at least, virtually admitted their own unfitness for the marriage tie by remaining in celibacy;—Newton, Gassendi, Galileo, Descartes, Bayle, Locke, Leibnitz, Boyle, Hume, and a long list of other illustrious sages, having all led single lives*.

The poetic race, it is true, from the greater susceptibility of their imaginations, have more frequently fallen into the ever ready snare. But the fate of the poets in matrimony has but justified the caution of the philosophers. While the latter have given warning to genius by keeping free of the yoke, the others have still more effectually done so by their misery under it;—the annals of this sensitive race having, at all times, abounded with proofs, that genius ranks but low among the elements of social happiness,—that, in general, the brighter the gift, the more disturbing its influence, and that in married life particularly, its effects have been too often like that of the “Wormwood Star,” whose light filled the waters on which it fell with bitterness.

* Wife and children, Bacon tells us in one of his Essays, are ‘impediments to great enterprises;’ and adds, ‘Certainly, the best works, and of greatest merit for the public, have proceeded from the unmarried or childless men.’ See, with reference to this subject, chapter xviii. of Mr. D’Israeli’s work on ‘The Literary Character.’

Besides the causes already enumerated as leading naturally to such a result, from the peculiarities by which, in most instances, these great labourers in the field of thought are characterized, there is also much, no doubt, to be attributed to an unluckiness in the choice of helpmates,—dictated, as that choice frequently must be, by an imagination accustomed to deceive itself. But from whatever causes it may have arisen, the coincidence is no less striking than saddening that, on the list of married poets who have been unhappy in their homes, there should already be found four such illustrious names as Dante, Milton*, Shakspeare†, and Dryden; and that we should now have to add, as a partner in their destiny, a name worthy of being placed beside the greatest of them,—Lord Byron.

I have already mentioned my having been called up to town in the December of this year. The opportunities I had of seeing Lord Byron during my stay were frequent; and, among them, not the least memo-

* Milton's first wife, it is well known, ran away from him, within a month after their marriage, disgusted, says Phillips, 'with his spare diet and hard study;' and it is difficult to conceive a more melancholy picture of domestic life than is disclosed in his Nuncupative Will, one of the witnesses to which deposes to having heard the great Poet himself complain, that his children 'were careless of him, being blind, and made nothing of deserting him.'

† By whatever austerity of temper or habits the poets Dante and Milton may have drawn upon themselves such a fate, it might be expected that, at least, the 'gentle Shakspeare' would have stood exempt from the common calamity of his brethren. But, among the very few facts of his life that have been transmitted to us, there is none more clearly proved than the unhappiness of his marriage. The dates of the birth of his children, compared with that of his removal from Stratford,—the total omission of his wife's name in the first draft of his will, and the bitter sarcasm of the bequest by which he remembers her afterwards,—all prove beyond a doubt both his separation from the lady early in life, and his unfriendly feeling towards her at the close of it.

In endeavouring to argue against the conclusion naturally to be deduced from this will, Boswell, with a strange ignorance of human nature, remarks:—'If he had taken offence at any part of his wife's conduct, I cannot believe that he would have taken this petty mode of expressing it.'

rable or agreeable were those evenings we passed together at the house of his banker, Mr. Douglas Kinnaird, where music,—followed by its accustomed sequel of supper, brandy and water, and not a little laughter,—kept us together, usually, till rather a late hour. Besides those songs of mine which he has himself somewhere recorded as his favourites, there was also one, to a Portuguese air, ‘The song of war shall echo through our mountains,’ which seemed especially to please him;—the national character of the music, and the recurrence of the words ‘sunny mountains,’ bringing back freshly to his memory the impressions of all he had seen in Portugal. I have, indeed, known few persons more alive to the charms of simple music; and not unfrequently have seen the tears in his eyes while listening to the Irish Melodies. Among those that thus affected him was one beginning ‘When first I met thee warm and young,’ the words of which, besides the obvious feeling which they express, were intended also to admit of a political application. He, however, discarded the latter sense wholly from his mind, and gave himself up to the more natural sentiment of the song with evident emotion.

On one or two of these evenings, his favourite actor, Mr. Kean, was of the party; and on another occasion, we had at dinner his early instructor in pugilism, Mr. Jackson, in conversing with whom, all his boyish tastes seemed to revive;—and it was not a little amusing to observe how perfectly familiar with the annals of ‘the Ring*,’ and with all the most recondite phraseology

* In a small book which I have in my possession, containing a sort of chronological History of the Ring, I find the name of Lord Byron, more than once, recorded among the ‘backers.’

of 'the Fancy,' was the sublime poet of Childe Harold.

The following note is the only one, of those I received from him at this time, worth transcribing.

' December 14th, 1814.

' My dearest Tom,

' I will send the pattern to-morrow, and since
' you don't go to our friend ("of the *keeping* part of
' the town") this evening, I shall e'en sulk at home
' over a solitary potation. My self-opinion rises much
' by your eulogy of my social qualities. As my friend
' Scrope is pleased to say, I believe I am very well for
' a "holiday drinker." Where the devil are you?
' With Woolridge*, I conjecture—for which you de-
' serve another abscess. Hoping that the American
' war will last for many years, and that all the prizes
' may be registered at Bermoothes, believe me, &c.

' P. S. I have just been composing an epistle to the
' archbishop for an especial licence. Oons! it looks
' serious. Murray is impatient to see you, and would
' call, if you will give him audience. Your new coat!
' —I wonder you like the colour, and don't go about,
' like Dives, in purple.'

LETTER 207.

TO MR. MURRAY.

' December 31st, 1814.

' A thousand thanks for Gibbon: all the additions
' are very great improvements.

' At last, I must be *most* peremptory with you about
' the *print* from Phillips's picture: it is pronounced on
' all hands the most stupid and disagreeable possible:

* Doctor Woolriche, an old and valued friend of mine, to whose skill, on the occasion here alluded to, I was indebted for my life.

‘ so do, pray, have a new engraving, and let me see it
‘ first; there really must be no more from the same
‘ plate. I don’t much care, myself; but every one I
‘ honour torments me to death about it, and abuses it to
‘ a degree beyond repeating. Now, don’t answer with
‘ excuses; but, for my sake, have it destroyed: I never
‘ shall have peace till it is. I write in the greatest
‘ haste.

‘ P. S. I have written this most illegibly; but it is
‘ to beg you to destroy the print, and have another
‘ “by particular desire.” It must be d—d bad, to be
‘ sure, since everybody says so but the original; and
‘ he don’t know what to say. But do *do* it: that is,
‘ burn the plate, and employ a new *etcher* from the
‘ other picture. This is stupid and sulky.”

On his arrival in town, he had, upon inquiring into the state of his affairs, found them in so utterly embarrassed a condition as to fill him with some alarm, and even to suggest to his mind the prudence of deferring his marriage. The die was, however, cast, and he had now no alternative but to proceed. Accordingly, at the end of December, accompanied by his friend, Mr. Hobhouse, he set out for Seaham, the seat of Sir Ralph Milbanke, the lady’s father, in the county of Durham, and on the 2d of January, 1815, was married.

‘ I saw him stand
‘ Before an altar with a gentle bride;
‘ Her face was fair, but was not that which made
‘ The Starlight of his Boyhood;—as he stood
‘ Even at the altar, o’er his brow there came
‘ The self-same aspect, and the quivering shock
‘ That in the antique Oratory shook
‘ His bosom in its solitude; and then—

‘As in that hour—a moment o’er his face,
‘The tablet of unutterable thoughts,
‘Was traced,—and then it faded as it came,
‘And he stood calm and quiet, and he spoke
‘The fitting vows, but heard not his own words,
‘And all things reel’d around him; he could see
‘Not that which was, nor that which should have been—
‘But the old mansion, and the accustom’d hall,
‘And the remember’d chambers, and the place,
‘The day, the hour, the sunshine, and the shade,
‘All things pertaining to that place and hour,
‘And her, who was his destiny, came back,
‘And thrust themselves between him and the light:—
‘What business had they there at such a time *?’

This touching picture agrees so closely, in many of its circumstances, with his own prose account of the wedding in his Memoranda, that I feel justified in introducing it, historically, here. In that Memoir, he described himself as waking, on the morning of his marriage, with the most melancholy reflections, on seeing his wedding-suit spread out before him. In the same mood, he wandered about the grounds alone, till he was summoned for the ceremony, and joined, for the first time on that day, his bride and her family. He knelt down, he repeated the words after the clergyman; but a mist was before his eyes,—his thoughts were elsewhere; and he was but awakened by the congratulations of the bystanders, to find that he was—married.

The same morning the wedded pair left Seaham for Halnaby, another seat of Sir Ralph Milbanke, in the same county. When about to depart, Lord Byron said to the bride, ‘Miss Milbanke, are you ready?’—a mistake which the lady’s confidential attendant pronounced to be a ‘bad omen.’

It is right to add, that I quote these slight details

* The Dream.

from memory, and am alone answerable for any inaccuracy there may be found in them.

LETTER 208.

TO MR. MURRAY.

' Kirkby, January 6th, 1815.

*' The marriage took place on the 2d instant : so pray
' make haste and congratulate away.*

*' Thanks for the Edinburgh Review and the aboli-
' tion of the print. Let the next be from the other of
' Phillips—I mean (not the Albanian, but) the ori-
' ginal one in the exhibition ; the last was from the
' copy. I should wish my sister and Lady Byron
' to decide upon the next, as they found fault with
' the last. I have no opinion of my own upon the
' subject.*

*' Mr. Kinnaird will, I dare say, have the goodness
' to furnish copies of the Melodies*, if you state my
' wish upon the subject. You may have them, if you
' think them worth inserting. The volumes in their
' collected state must be inscribed to Mr. Hobhouse,
' but I have not yet mustered the expressions of my
' inscription ; but will supply them in time.*

*' With many thanks for your good wishes, which
' have all been realized, I remain very truly, yours,
' BYRON.'*

LETTER 209.

TO MR. MOORE.

' Halnaby, Darlington, January 10th, 1815.

*' I was married this day week. The parson has
' pronounced it—Perry has announced it—and the
' Morning Post, also, under the head of “ Lord Byron’s*

* The Hebrew Melodies which he had employed himself in writing, during his recent stay in London.

‘ Marriage’—as if it were a fabrication, or the puff-
‘ direct of a new stay-maker.

‘ Now for thine affairs. I have redde thee upon the
‘ Fathers, and it is excellent well. Positively, you
‘ must not leave off reviewing. You shine in it—you
‘ kill in it; and this article has been taken for Sydney
‘ Smith’s (as I heard in town), which proves not only
‘ your proficiency in parsonology, but that you have all
‘ the airs of a veteran critic at your first onset. So,
‘ prithee, go on and prosper.

‘ Scott’s “ Lord of the Isles ” is out—“ the mail-
‘ coach copy ” I have, by special licence of Murray.

‘ Now is *your* time;—you will come upon them
‘ newly and freshly. It is impossible to read what you
‘ have lately done (verse or prose) without seeing that
‘ you have trained on tenfold. * * has floundered;
‘ * * has foundered. I have tired the rascals (i. e. the
‘ public) with my Harrys and Larrys, Pilgrims and
‘ Pirates. Nobody but S * * * *y has done anything
‘ worth a slice of bookseller’s pudding; and *he* has not
‘ luck enough to be found out in doing a good thing.
‘ Now, Tom, is thy time—“ Oh joyful day!—I would
‘ not take a knighthood for thy fortune.” Let me hear
‘ from you soon, and believe me ever, &c.

‘ P.S. Lady Byron is vastly well. How are Mrs.
‘ Moore and Joe Atkinson’s “ Graces ? ” We must pre-
‘ sent our women to one another.’

LETTER 210.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ January 19th, 1815.

‘ Egad! I don’t think he is “ down ; ” and my pro-
‘ phecy—like most auguries, sacred and profane—is
‘ not annulled, but inverted.

‘ To your question about the “dog*”—Umph!—my
 ‘ “mother,” I won’t say anything against—that is,
 ‘ about her; but how long a “mistress” or friend may
 ‘ recollect paramours or competitors (lust and thirst
 ‘ being the two great and only bonds between the ama-
 ‘ tory or the amicable), I can’t say,—or, rather, you
 ‘ know, as well as I could tell you. But as for canine
 ‘ recollections, as far as I could judge by a cur of mine
 ‘ own (always bating Boatswain, the dearest and, alas!
 ‘ the maddest of dogs), I had one (half a *wolf* by the
 ‘ she side) that doted on me at ten years old, and very
 ‘ nearly ate me at twenty. When I thought he was
 ‘ going to enact Argus, he bit away the backside of my
 ‘ breeches, and never would consent to any kind of
 ‘ recognition, in despite of all kinds of bones which I
 ‘ offered him. So, let Southey blush and Homer too,
 ‘ as far as I can decide upon quadruped memories.

‘ I humbly take it, the mother knows the son that
 ‘ pays her jointure—a mistress her mate, till he * * and
 ‘ refuses salary—a friend his fellow, till he loses cash
 ‘ and character—and a dog his master, till he changes
 ‘ him.

‘ So, you want to know about milady and me? But
 ‘ let me not, as Roderick Random says, “profane the
 ‘ chaste mysteries of Hymen†”—damn the word, I
 ‘ had nearly spelt it with a small *h*. I like Bell as
 ‘ well as you do (or did, you villain!) Bessy—and that
 ‘ is (or was) saying a great deal.

* I had just been reading Mr. Southey’s fine Poem of ‘Roderick;’
 and with reference to an incident in it, had put the following question to
 Lord Byron—‘I should like to know from *you*, who are one of the Philo-
 ‘ cynic sect, whether it is probable, that any dog (out of a melodrame)
 ‘ could recognise a master, whom neither his own mother or mistress
 ‘ was able to find out. I don’t care about Ulysses’s dog, &c.—all I want
 ‘ is to know from *you* (who are renowned as “friend of the dog, compa-
 ‘ nion of the bear”) whether such a thing is probable.’

† The letter *H*. is blotted in the MS.

‘ Address your next to Seaham, Stockton-on-Tees,
 ‘ where we are going on Saturday (a bore, by the way)
 ‘ to see father-in-law, Sir Jacob, and my lady’s lady-
 ‘ mother. Write—and write more at length—both to
 ‘ the public and yours ever most affectionately,
 ‘ B.’

LETTER 211.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *Seaham, Stockton-on-Tees, February 2d, 1815.*

‘ I have heard from London that you have left
 ‘ Chatsworth and all the women full of “entusy-
 ‘ musy*” about you, personally and poetically; and, in
 ‘ particular, that “When first I met thee” has been
 ‘ quite overwhelming in its effect. I told you it was
 ‘ one of the best things you ever wrote, though that
 ‘ dog Power wanted you to omit part of it. They are
 ‘ all regretting your absence at Chatsworth, according
 ‘ to my informant—“all the ladies quite, &c. &c. &c.”
 ‘ Stap my vitals!

‘ Well, now you have got home again—which I
 ‘ dare say is as agreeable as a “draught of cool small
 ‘ beer to the scorched palate of a waking sot”—now
 ‘ you have got home again, I say, probably I shall
 ‘ hear from you. Since I wrote last, I have been trans-
 ‘ ferred to my father-in-law’s, with my lady and my
 ‘ lady’s maid, &c. &c. &c. and the treacle-moon is over,
 ‘ and I am awake, and find myself married. My spouse
 ‘ and I agree to—and in—admiration. Swift says
 ‘ “no *wise* man ever married;” but, for a fool, I think
 ‘ it the most ambrosial of all possible future states. I
 ‘ still think one ought to ~~marry~~ marry upon *lease*; but am very
 ‘ sure I should renew mine at the expiration, though
 ‘ next term were for ninety and nine years.

* It was thus that, according to his account, a certain celebrated singer and actor used frequently to pronounce the word ‘enthusiasm.’

‘ I wish you would respond, for I am here “oblitus-
 ‘ que meorum obliviscendus et illis.” Pray tell me
 ‘ what is going on in the way of intrigue, and how
 ‘ the w——s and rogues of the upper Beggar’s Opera
 ‘ go on—or rather go off—in or after marriage; or
 ‘ who are going to break any particular commandment.
 ‘ Upon this dreary coast, we have nothing but county
 ‘ meetings and shipwrecks; and I have this day dined
 ‘ upon fish, which probably dined upon the crews of
 ‘ several colliers lost in the late gales. But I saw the
 ‘ sea once more in all the glories of surf and foam,—
 ‘ almost equal to the Bay of Biscay, and the interesting
 ‘ white squalls and short seas of Archipelago memory.

‘ My papa, Sir Ralpho, hath recently made a speech
 ‘ at a Durham tax-meeting; and not only at Durham,
 ‘ but here, several times since, after dinner. He is now,
 ‘ I believe, speaking it to himself (I left him in the
 ‘ middle) over various decanters, which can neither
 ‘ interrupt him nor fall asleep,—as might possibly
 ‘ have been the case with some of his audience. Ever
 ‘ thine, ‘ B.

‘ I must go to tea—damn tea. I wish it was Kin-
 ‘ naird’s brandy, and with you to lecture me about it.’

LETTER 212.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Seaham, Stockton-upon-Tees, February 2d, 1815.*

‘ You will oblige me very much by making an
 ‘ occasional inquiry at Albany, at my chambers, whe-
 ‘ ther my books, &c. are kept in tolerable order, and
 ‘ how far my old woman* continues in health and
 ‘ industry as keeper of my old den. Your parcels have
 ‘ been duly received and perused; but I had hoped to
 ‘ receive “Guy Mannering” before this time. I won’t

* Mrs. Mule.

‘ intrude further for the present on your avocations,
 ‘ professional or pleasurable, but am, as usual,
 ‘ Very truly, &c.’

LETTER 213.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ February 4th, 1815.

‘ I enclose you half a letter from * * which will
 ‘ explain itself—at least the latter part—the former
 ‘ refers to private business of mine own. If Jeffrey
 ‘ will take such an article, and you will undertake the
 ‘ revision, or, indeed, any portion of the article itself
 ‘ (for unless *you do*, by Phœbus, I will have nothing
 ‘ to do with it), we can cook up, between us three, as
 ‘ pretty a dish of sour-cROUT as ever tipped over the
 ‘ tongue of a bookmaker.

‘ You can, at any rate, try Jeffrey’s inclination.
 ‘ Your late proposal from him made me hint this to * *,
 ‘ who is a much better proser and scholar than I am,
 ‘ and a very superior man indeed. Excuse haste—
 ‘ answer this.

‘ Ever yours most,

‘ B.

‘ P.S. All is well at home. I wrote to you yesterday.’

LETTER 214.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ February 10th, 1815.

‘ My dear Tom,

‘ Jeffrey has been so very kind about me and my
 ‘ damnable works, that I would not be indirect or
 ‘ equivocal with him, even for a friend. So, it may
 ‘ be as well to tell him that it is not mine; but that,
 ‘ if I did not firmly and truly believe it to be much
 ‘ better than I could offer, I would never have troubled
 ‘ him or you about it. You can judge between you
 ‘ how far it is admissible, and reject it, if not of the

‘ right sort. For my own part, I have no interest in
‘ the article one way or the other, further than to
‘ oblige * *, and should the composition be a good
‘ one, it can hurt neither party,—nor, indeed, any one,
‘ saving and excepting Mr: ****.

‘ Curse catch me if I know what H** means or
‘ meant about the demonstrative pronoun*, but I
‘ admire your fear of being inoculated with the same.
‘ Have you never found out that you have a particular
‘ style of your own, which is as distinct from all other
‘ people, as Hafiz of Shiraz from Hafiz of the Morning
‘ Post?

‘ So you allowed B** and such like to hum and
‘ haw you, or, rather, Lady J** out of her compliment,
‘ and *me* out of mine†. Sun-burn me, but this was
‘ pitiful-hearted. However, I will tell her all about
‘ it when I see her.

‘ Bell desires me to say all kinds of civilities, and
‘ assure you of her recognition and high consideration.
‘ I will tell you of our movements south, which may
‘ be in about three weeks from this present writing.
‘ By the way, don’t engage yourself in any travelling
‘ expedition, as I have a plan of travel into Italy,
‘ which we will discuss. And then, think of the
‘ poesy wherewithal we should overflow, from Venice
‘ to Vesuvius, to say nothing of Greece, through all
‘ which—God willing—we might perambulate in one
‘ twelve-months. If I take my wife, you can take
‘ yours; and if I leave mine, you may do the same.

* Some remark which he told me had been made with respect to the frequent use of the demonstrative pronoun both by himself and by Sir W. Scott.

† Verses to Lady J** (containing an allusion to Lord Byron); which I had written, while at Chatsworth, but consigned afterwards to the flames.

‘ “Mind you stand by me in either case, Brother
 ‘ Bruin.”

‘ And believe me inveterately yours,
 ‘ B.’

LETTER 215.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ February 22nd, 1815.

‘ Yesterday I sent off the packet and letter to
 ‘ Edinburgh. It consisted of forty-one pages, so that
 ‘ I have not added a line; but in my letter, I men-
 ‘ tioned what passed between you and me in autumn,
 ‘ as my inducement for presuming to trouble him
 ‘ either with my own or **’s lucubrations. I am
 ‘ anything but sure that it will do; but I have told
 ‘ J. that if there is any decent raw material in it, he
 ‘ may cut it into what shape he pleases, and warp it
 ‘ to his liking.

‘ So you *won’t* go abroad, then, with *me*,—but alone.
 ‘ I fully purpose starting much about the time you
 ‘ mention, and alone, too.

‘ I hope J. won’t think me very impudent in send-
 ‘ ing * * only: there was not room for a syllable. I
 ‘ have avowed * * as the author, and said that you
 ‘ thought or said, when I met you last, that he (J.)
 ‘ would not be angry at the coalition (though, alas!
 ‘ we have not coalesced), and so, if I have got into a
 ‘ scrape, I must get out of it—Heaven knows how.

‘ Your Anacreon* is come, and with it I sealed (its
 ‘ first impression) the packet and epistle to our patron.

‘ Curse the Melodies and the Tribes, to boot†.
 ‘ Braham is to assist—or hath assisted—but will do no
 ‘ more good than a second physician. I merely inter-

* A seal, with the head of Anacreon, which I had given him.

† I had taken the liberty of laughing a little at the manner in which
 some of his Hebrew Melodies had been set to music.

‘ fered to oblige a whim of K.’s, and all I have got by
 ‘ it was “ a speech ” and a receipt for stewed oysters.

‘ “ Not meet ”—pray don’t say so. We must meet
 ‘ somewhere or somehow. Newstead is out of the
 ‘ question, being nearly sold again, or, if not, it is
 ‘ uninhabitable for my spouse. Pray write again. I
 ‘ will soon.

‘ P.S. Pray when do you come out? ever, or never?
 ‘ I hope I have made no blunder; but I certainly think
 ‘ you said to me (after W * *th, whom I first pondered
 ‘ upon, was given up) that * * and I might attempt
 ‘ * * * *. *His* length alone prevented me from trying
 ‘ my part, though I should have been less severe
 ‘ upon the Reviewée.

‘ Your seal is the best and prettiest of my set, and
 ‘ I thank you very much therefor. I have just been—
 ‘ or, rather, ought to be—very much shocked by the
 ‘ death of the Duke of Dorset. We were at school
 ‘ together, and there I was passionately attached to
 ‘ him. Since, we have never met—but once, I think,
 ‘ since 1805—and it would be a paltry affectation to
 ‘ pretend that I had any feeling for him worth the
 ‘ name. But there was a time in my life when this
 ‘ event would have broken my heart; and all I can
 ‘ say for it now is that—it is not worth breaking.

‘ Adieu—it is all a farce.’

LETTER 216.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *March 2nd, 1815.*

‘ My dear Thom,

‘ Jeffrey has sent me the most friendly of all pos-
 ‘ sible letters, and has accepted * *’s article. He says
 ‘ he has long liked not only, &c. &c. but my “ cha-
 ‘ racter.” This must be *your* doing, you dog—
 ‘ ar’nt you ashamed of yourself, knowing me so well?

‘ This is what one gets for having you for a father
‘ confessor.

‘ I feel merry enough to send you a sad song*. You
‘ once asked me for some words which you would set.
‘ Now you may set or not, as you like,—but there they
‘ are, in a legible hand†, and not in mine, but of my
‘ own scribbling; so you may say of them what you
‘ please. Why don’t you write to me? I shall make
‘ you a “speech ‡” if you don’t respond quickly.

‘ I am in such a state of sameness and stagnation,
‘ and so totally occupied in consuming the fruits—and
‘ sauntering—and playing dull games at cards—and
‘ yawning—and trying to read old Annual Registers
‘ and the daily papers—and gathering shells on the
‘ shore—and watching the growth of stunted goose-
‘ berry bushes in the garden—that I have neither time
‘ nor sense to say more than yours ever,

‘ B,

‘ P. S. I open my letter again to put a question to
‘ you. What would Lady C——k, or any other
‘ fashionable Pidcock, give to collect you and Jeffrey
‘ and me to *one* party? I have been answering his
‘ letter, which suggested this dainty query. I can’t
‘ help laughing at the thoughts of your face and mine;
‘ and our anxiety to keep the Aristarch in good hu-
‘ mour during the *early* part of a computation, till we
‘ got drunk enough to make him “a speech.” I think
‘ the critic would have much the best of us—of one, at

* The verses enclosed were those melancholy ones, now printed in his works, ‘There’s not a joy the world can give like those it takes away.’

† The MS. was in the handwriting of Lady Byron.

‡ These allusions to ‘a speech’ are connected with a little incident, not worth mentioning, which had amused us both when I was in town. He was rather fond (and had been always so, as may be seen in his early letters) of thus harping on some conventional phrase or joke.

‘ least—for I don’t think diffidence (I mean social) is
‘ a disease of yours.’

LETTER 217.

TO MR. MOORE,

‘ *March 8th, 1815.*

‘ An event—the death of poor Dorset—and the
‘ recollection of what I once felt, and ought to have
‘ felt now, but could not—set me pondering, and
‘ finally into the train of thought which you have in
‘ your hands. I am very glad you like them, for I
‘ flatter myself they will pass as an imitation of your
‘ style. If I could imitate it well, I should have no
‘ great ambition of originality—I wish I could make
‘ you exclaim with Dennis, “That’s my thunder, by
‘ G—d!” I wrote them with a view to your setting
‘ them, and as a present to Power, if he would accept
‘ the words, and *you* did not think yourself degraded,
‘ for once in a way, by marrying them to music.

‘ Sun-burn N * *!—why do you always twit me
‘ with his vile Ebrew nasalities? Have I not told
‘ you it was all K.’s doing, and my own exquisite faci-
‘ lity of temper? But thou wilt be a wag, Thomas;
‘ and see what you get for it. Now for my revenge.

‘ Depend—and perpend—upon it that your opinion
‘ of * *’s Poem will travel through one or other of the
‘ quintuple correspondents, till it reaches the ear and
‘ the liver of the author*. Your adventure, however,

* He here alludes to a circumstance which I had communicated to him in a preceding letter. In writing to one of the numerous partners of a well-known publishing establishment (with which I have since been lucky enough to form a more intimate connexion), I had said confidentially (as I thought), in reference to a poem that had just appeared,—‘Between you and me, I do not much admire Mr. * *’s Poem.’ The letter being chiefly upon business, was answered through the regular business channel, and, to my dismay, concluded with the following words:—‘We are very sorry that you do not approve of Mr. * *’s new Poem, and are your obedient, &c. &c. L. H. R. O., &c. &c.’

‘ is truly laughable—but how could you be such a
‘ potatoe? You, “a brother” (of the quill) too, “near
‘ the throne,” to confide to a man’s *own publisher* (who
‘ has “bought,” or rather sold, “golden opinions”
‘ about him) such a damnatory parenthesis! “Be-
‘ tween you and me,” quotha—it reminds me of a
‘ passage in the Heir at Law—“Tête-à-tête with Lady
‘ Duberly, I suppose”—“No—tête-à-tête with *five hun-*
‘ *dred people* ;” and your confidential communication
‘ will doubtless be in circulation to that amount, in a
‘ short time, with several additions, and in several let-
‘ ters, all signed L. H. R. O. B., &c. &c. &c.

‘ We leave this place to-morrow, and shall stop on
‘ our way to town (in the interval of taking a house
‘ there) at Col. Leigh’s, near Newmarket, where any
‘ epistle of yours will find its welcome way.

‘ I have been very comfortable here,—listening to
‘ that d—d monologue, which elderly gentlemen call
‘ conversation, and in which my pious father-in-law
‘ repeats himself every evening—save one, when he
‘ played upon the fiddle. However, they have been
‘ very kind and hospitable, and I like them and the
‘ place vastly, and I hope they will live many happy
‘ months. Bell is in health, and unvaried good-humour
‘ and behaviour. But we are all in the agonies of
‘ packing and parting; and I suppose by this time
‘ to-morrow I shall be stuck in the chariot with my
‘ chin upon a band-box. I have prepared, however,
‘ another carriage for the abigail, and all the trumpery
‘ which our wives drag along with them.

‘ Ever thine, most affectionately,

‘ B.’

LETTER 218.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *March 17th, 1815.*

‘ I meant to write to you before on the subject of
‘ your loss*; but the recollection of the uselessness
‘ and worthlessness of any observations on such events
‘ prevented me. I shall only now add, that I rejoice
‘ to see you bear it so well, and that I trust time will
‘ enable Mrs. M. to sustain it better. Everything
‘ should be done to divert and occupy her with other
‘ thoughts and cares, and I am sure that all that can
‘ be done will.

‘ Now to your letter. Napoleon—but the papers
‘ will have told you all. I quite think with you upon
‘ the subject, and for my *real* thoughts this time last
‘ year, | I would refer you to the last pages of the
‘ Journal I gave you. I can forgive the rogue for
‘ utterly falsifying every line of mine Ode—which I
‘ take to be the last and uttermost stretch of human
‘ magnanimity. Do you remember the story of a
‘ certain Abbé, who wrote a Treatise on the Swedish
‘ Constitution, and proved it indissoluble and eternal?
‘ Just as he had corrected the last sheet, news came
‘ that Gustavus III. had destroyed this immortal go-
‘ vernment. “Sir,” quoth the Abbé, “the King of
‘ Sweden may overthrow the *constitution*, but not *my*
‘ *book!!*” I think *of* the Abbé, but not *with* him.

‘ Making every allowance for talent and most con-
‘ summate daring, there is, after all, a good deal in
‘ luck or destiny. He might have been stopped by
‘ our frigates—or wrecked in the Gulf of Lyons,
‘ which is particularly tempestuous—or—a thousand
‘ things. But he is certainly Fortune’s favourite, and

* The death of his infant god-daughter, Olivia Byron Moore.

‘ Once fairly set out on his party of pleasure,
‘ Taking towns at his liking and crowns at his leisure,
‘ From Elba to Lyons and Paris he goes,
‘ Making *balls* for the ladies, and *bowes* to his foes,

‘ You must have seen the account of his driving into
‘ the middle of the royal army, and the immediate effect
‘ of his pretty speeches. And now, if he don’t drub
‘ the allies, there is “no purchase in money.” If he
‘ can take France by himself, the devil’s in’t if he
‘ don’t repulse the invaders, when backed by those
‘ celebrated swordsmen—those boys of the blade, the
‘ Imperial Guard, and the old and new army. It is
‘ impossible not to be dazzled and overwhelmed by
‘ his character and career. Nothing ever so disap-
‘ pointed me as his abdication, and nothing could have
‘ reconciled me to him but some such revival as his
‘ recent exploit; though no one could anticipate such
‘ a complete and brilliant renovation.

‘ To your question, I can only answer that there
‘ have been some symptoms which look a little ges-
‘ tatory. It is a subject upon which I am not parti-
‘ cularly anxious, except that I think it would please
‘ her uncle, Lord Wentworth, and her father and mo-
‘ ther. The former (Lord W.) is now in town, and in
‘ very indifferent health. You, perhaps, know that
‘ his property, amounting to seven or eight thousand
‘ a year, will eventually devolve upon Bell. But the
‘ old gentleman has been so very kind to her and me,
‘ that I hardly know how to wish him in heaven, if he
‘ can be comfortable on earth. Her father is still in
‘ the country.

‘ We mean to metropolize to-morrow, and you will
‘ address your next to Piccadilly. We have got the
‘ Duchess of Devon’s house there, she being in
‘ France.

‘ I don’t care what Power says to secure the pro-
 ‘ perty of the Song, so that it is *not* complimentary
 ‘ to me, nor anything about “condescending” or
 ‘ “*noble* author”—both “vile phrases,” as Polonius
 ‘ says.

‘ Pray, let me hear from you, and when you mean
 ‘ to be in town. Your continental scheme is imprac-
 ‘ ticable for the present. I have to thank you for a
 ‘ longer letter than usual, which I hope will induce
 ‘ you to tax my gratitude still further in the same
 ‘ way.

‘ You never told me about “Longman” and “next
 ‘ winter,” and I am *not* a “mile-stone*.”

LETTER 219,

TO MR. COLERIDGE.

‘ *Piccadilly, March 31st, 1815.*

‘ Dear Sir,

‘ It will give me great pleasure to comply with
 ‘ your request, though I hope there is still taste enough
 ‘ left amongst us to render it almost unnecessary, sordid
 ‘ and interested as, it must be admitted, many of “the
 ‘ trade” are, where circumstances give them an advan-
 ‘ tage. I trust you do not permit yourself to be de-
 ‘ pressed by the temporary partiality of what is called
 ‘ “the public” for the favourites of the moment; all
 ‘ experience is against the permanency of such impres-
 ‘ sions. You must have lived to see many of these
 ‘ pass away, and will survive many more—I mean per-
 ‘ sonally, for, *poetically*, I would not insult you by a
 ‘ comparison.

* I had accused him of having entirely forgot that, in a preceding letter, I had informed him of my intention to publish with the Messrs. Longman in the ensuing winter, and added that, in giving him this information, I found I had been—to use an elegant Irish metaphor—‘whistling jigs to a mile-stone.’

‘ If I may be permitted, I would suggest that there
‘ never was such an opening for tragedy. In Kean,
‘ there is an actor worthy of expressing the thoughts
‘ of the characters which you have every power of
‘ embodying; and I cannot but regret that the part of
‘ Ordonio was disposed of before his appearance at
‘ Drury-lane. We have had nothing to be mentioned
‘ in the same breath with ‘ Remorse’ for very many
‘ years; and I should think that the reception of that
‘ play was sufficient to encourage the highest hopes of
‘ author and audience. It is to be hoped that you are
‘ proceeding in a career which could not but be suc-
‘ cessful. With my best respects to Mr. Bowles, I
‘ have the honour to be

‘ Your obliged and very obedient servant,
‘ BYRON.’

‘ P.S. You mention my “ Satire,” lampoon, or what-
‘ ever you or others please to call it. I can only say,
‘ that it was written when I was very young and very
‘ angry, and has been a thorn in my side ever since;
‘ more particularly as almost all the persons animad-
‘ verted upon became subsequently my acquaintances,
‘ and some of them my friends, which is “ heaping fire
‘ upon an enemy’s head,” and forgiving me too readily
‘ to permit me to forgive myself. The part applied to
‘ you is pert, and petulant, and shallow enough; but,
‘ although I have long done everything in my power
‘ to suppress the circulation of the whole thing, I shall
‘ always regret the wantonness or generality of many
‘ of its attempted attacks.”

It was in the course of this spring that Lord Byron and Sir Walter Scott became, for the first time, personally acquainted with each other. Mr. Murray,

having been previously on a visit to the latter gentleman, had been intrusted by him with a superb Turkish dagger, as a present to Lord Byron; and the noble poet, on their meeting this year, in London,—the only time when these two great men had ever an opportunity of enjoying each other's society,—presented to Sir Walter, in return, a vase containing some human bones that had been dug up from under a part of the old walls of Athens. The reader, however, will be much better pleased to have these particulars in the words of Sir Walter Scott himself, who, with that good-nature which renders him no less amiable than he is admirable, has found time, in the midst of all his marvellous labours for the world, to favour me with the following interesting communication * :—

‘ My first acquaintance with Byron began in a man-

* A few passages at the beginning of these recollections have been omitted, as containing particulars relative to Lord Byron's mother, which have already been mentioned in the early part of this work. Among these, however, there is one anecdote, the repetition of which will be easily pardoned, on account of the infinitely greater interest as well as authenticity imparted to its details by coming from such an eye-witness as Sir Walter Scott:—‘ I remember,’ he says, ‘ having seen Lord Byron's mother before she was married, and a certain coincidence rendered the circumstance rather remarkable. It was during Mrs. Siddons's first or second visit to Edinburgh, when the music of that wonderful actress's voice, looks, manner, and person, produced the strongest effect which could possibly be exerted by a human being upon her fellow-creatures. Nothing of the kind that I ever witnessed approached it by a hundred degrees. The high state of excitation was aided by the difficulties of obtaining entrance and the exhausting length of time that the audience were contented to wait until the piece commenced. When the curtain fell, a large proportion of the ladies were generally in hysterics.

‘ I remember Miss Gordon of Ghight, in particular, harrowing the house by the desperate and wild way in which she shrieked out Mrs. Siddons's exclamation, in the character of Isabella, “ Oh my Byron! Oh my Byron!” A well-known medical gentleman, the benevolent Dr. Alexander Wood, tendered his assistance; but the thick-pressed audience could not for a long time make way for the doctor to approach his patient, or the patient the physician. The remarkable circumstance was, that the lady had not then seen Captain Byron, who, like Sir Toby, made her conclude with “ Oh!” as she had begun with it.’

‘ ner rather doubtful. I was so far from having any-
‘ thing to do with the offensive criticism in the Edin-
‘ burgh, that I remember remonstrating against it with
‘ our friend, the editor, because I thought the “ Hours
‘ of Idleness ” treated with undue severity. They were
‘ written, like all juvenile poetry, rather from the
‘ recollection of what had pleased the author in others
‘ than what had been suggested by his own imagina-
‘ tion ; but, nevertheless, I thought they contained some
‘ passages of noble promise. I was so much impressed
‘ with this, that I had thoughts of writing to the
‘ author ; but some exaggerated reports concerning
‘ his peculiarities, and a natural unwillingness to
‘ intrude an opinion which was uncalled for, induced
‘ me to relinquish the idea.

‘ When Byron wrote his famous Satire, I had my
‘ share of flagellation among my betters. My crime
‘ was having written a poem (Marmion, I think) for a
‘ thousand pounds ; which was no otherwise true than
‘ that I sold the copyright for that sum. Now, not to
‘ mention that an author can hardly be censured for
‘ accepting such a sum as the booksellers are willing
‘ to give him, especially as the gentlemen of the trade
‘ made no complaints of their bargain, I thought the
‘ interference with my private affairs was rather beyond
‘ the limits of literary satire. On the other hand, Lord
‘ Byron paid me, in several passages, so much more
‘ praise than I deserved, that I must have been more
‘ irritable than I have ever felt upon such subjects,
‘ not to sit down contented and think no more about
‘ the matter.

‘ I was very much struck, with all the rest of the
‘ world, at the vigour and force of imagination dis-
‘ played in the first Cantos of Childe Harold, and the

‘ other splendid productions which Lord Byron flung
‘ from him to the public with a promptitude that
‘ savoured of profusion. My own popularity, as a
‘ poet, was then on the wane, and I was unaffectedly
‘ pleased to see an author of so much power and energy
‘ taking the field. Mr. John Murray happened to be
‘ in Scotland that season, and as I mentioned to him
‘ the pleasure I should have in making Lord Byron’s
‘ acquaintance, he had the kindness to mention my
‘ wish to his lordship, which led to some correspond-
‘ ence.

‘ It was in the spring of 1815 that, chancing to be
‘ in London, I had the advantage of a personal intro-
‘ duction to Lord Byron. Report had prepared me to
‘ meet a man of peculiar habits and a quick temper,
‘ and I had some doubts whether we were likely to suit
‘ each other in society. I was most agreeably dis-
‘ appointed in this respect. I found Lord Byron in the
‘ highest degree courteous, and even kind. We met,
‘ for an hour or two almost daily, in Mr. Murray’s
‘ drawing-room, and found a great deal to say to each
‘ other. We also met frequently in parties and even-
‘ ing society, so that for about two months I had the
‘ advantage of a considerable intimacy with this dis-
‘ tinguished individual. Our sentiments agreed a good
‘ deal, except upon the subjects of religion and politics,
‘ upon neither of which I was inclined to believe that
‘ Lord Byron entertained very fixed opinions. I re-
‘ member saying to him, that I really thought, that if
‘ he lived a few years he would alter his sentiments.
‘ He answered, rather sharply, “ I suppose you are
‘ one of those who prophesy I will turn Methodist.” I
‘ replied, “ No—I don’t expect your conversion to be of
‘ such an ordinary kind. I would rather look to see you

‘ retreat upon the Catholic faith, and distinguish your-
‘ self by the austerity of your penances. The species
‘ of religion to which you must, or may, one day
‘ attach yourself must exercise a strong power on the
‘ imagination.” He smiled gravely, and seemed to
‘ allow I might be right.

‘ On politics, he used sometimes to express a high
‘ strain of what is now called Liberalism; but it ap-
‘ peared to me that the pleasure it afforded him as a
‘ vehicle of displaying his wit and satire against indivi-
‘ duals in office was at the bottom of this habit of think-
‘ ing, rather than any real conviction of the political
‘ principles on which he talked. He was certainly
‘ proud of his rank and ancient family, and, in that
‘ respect, as much an aristocrat as was consistent with
‘ good sense and good breeding. Some disgusts, how
‘ adopted I know not, seemed to me to have given this
‘ peculiar and, as it appeared to me, contradictory
‘ cast of mind; but, at heart, I would have termed
‘ Byron a patrician on principle.

‘ Lord Byron’s reading did not seem to me to have
‘ been very extensive either in poetry or history.
‘ Having the advantage of him in that respect, and
‘ possessing a good competent share of such reading
‘ as is little read, I was sometimes able to put under
‘ his eye objects which had for him the interest of
‘ novelty. I remember particularly repeating to him
‘ the fine poem of Hardyknute, an imitation of the old
‘ Scottish Ballad, with which he was so much affected,
‘ that some one who was in the same apartment asked
‘ me what I could possibly have been telling Byron by
‘ which he was so much agitated.

‘ I saw Byron, for the last time, in 1815, after I
‘ returned from France. He dined, or lunched, with

‘ me at Long’s, in Bond-street. I never saw him so
 ‘ full of gaiety and good-humour, to which the pre-
 ‘ sence of Mr. Mathews, the comedian, added not a
 ‘ little. Poor Terry was also present. After one of
 ‘ the gayest parties I ever was present at, my fellow-
 ‘ traveller, Mr. Scott, of Gala, and I set off for Scot-
 ‘ land, and I never saw Lord Byron again. Several
 ‘ letters passed between us—one perhaps every half
 ‘ year. Like the old heroes in Homer, we exchanged
 ‘ gifts;—I gave Byron a beautiful dagger mounted with
 ‘ gold, which had been the property of the redoubted
 ‘ Elfi Bey. But I was to play the part of Diomed,
 ‘ in the Iliad, for Byron sent me, some time after,
 ‘ a large sepulchral vase of silver. It was full of dead
 ‘ men’s bones, and had inscriptions on two sides of the
 ‘ base. One ran thus—“ The bones contained in this
 ‘ urn were found in certain ancient sepulchres within
 ‘ the land walls of Athens, in the month of February,
 ‘ 1811.” The other face bears the lines of Juvenal :

‘ Expende—quot libras in duce summo invenies.

‘ —Mors sola fatetur quantula hominum corpuscula.’

JUV. X.

‘ To these I have added a third inscription, in these
 ‘ words—“ The gift of Lord Byron to Walter Scott*.”
 ‘ There was a letter with this vase more valuable to
 ‘ me than the gift itself, from the kindness with which
 ‘ the donor expressed himself towards me. I left it
 ‘ naturally in the urn with the bones,—but it is now

* Mr. Murray had, at the time of giving the vase, suggested to Lord Byron, that it would increase the value of the gift to add some such inscription; but the feeling of the noble poet on this subject will be understood from the following answer which he returned:—

‘ April 9th, 1815.

‘ Thanks for the books. I have great objection to your proposition
 ‘ about inscribing the vase,—which is, that it would appear *ostentatious*
 ‘ on my part; and of course I must send it as it is, without any alteration.

‘ Yours, &c.’

‘ missing. As the theft was not of a nature to be
‘ practised by a mere domestic, I am compelled to
‘ suspect the inhospitality of some individual of higher
‘ station,—most gratuitously exercised certainly, since,
‘ after what I have here said, no one will probably
‘ choose to boast of possessing this literary curiosity.

‘ We had a good deal of laughing, I remember, on
‘ what the public might be supposed to think, or say,
‘ concerning the gloomy and ominous nature of our
‘ mutual gifts.

‘ I think I can add little more to my recollections of
‘ Byron. He was often melancholy,—almost gloomy.
‘ When I observed him in this humour, I used either
‘ to wait till it went off of its own accord, or till some
‘ natural and easy mode occurred of leading him into
‘ conversation, when the shadows almost always left
‘ his countenance, like the mist rising from a land-
‘ scape. In conversation, he was very animated.

‘ I met with him very frequently in society; our
‘ mutual acquaintances doing me the honour to think
‘ that he liked to meet with me. Some very agree-
‘ able parties I can recollect,—particularly one at Sir
‘ George Beaumont’s, where the amiable landlord had
‘ assembled some persons distinguished for talent. Of
‘ these I need only mention the late Sir Humphry
‘ Davy, whose talents for literature were as remarkable
‘ as his empire over science. Mr. Richard Sharpe
‘ and Mr. Rogers were also present.

‘ I think I also remarked in Byron’s temper starts
‘ of suspicion, when he seemed to pause and consider
‘ whether there had not been a secret, and perhaps
‘ offensive, meaning in something casually said to him.
‘ In this case, I also judged it best to let his mind, like
‘ a troubled spring, work itself clear, which it did in a

‘ minute or two. I was considerably older, you will
‘ recollect, than my noble friend, and had no reason to
‘ fear his misconstruing my sentiments towards him,
‘ nor had I ever the slightest reason to doubt that they
‘ were kindly returned on his part. If I had occasion
‘ to be mortified by the display of genius which threw
‘ into the shade such pretensions as I was then sup-
‘ posed to possess, I might console myself that, in my
‘ own case, the materials of mental happiness had
‘ been mingled in a greater proportion.

‘ I rummage my brains in vain for what often rushes
‘ into my head unbidden,—little traits and sayings
‘ which recall his looks, manner, tone, and gestures ;
‘ and I have always continued to think that a crisis of
‘ life was arrived in which a new career of fame was
‘ opened to him, and that had he been permitted to
‘ start upon it, he would have obliterated the memory of
‘ such parts of his life as friends would wish to forget.’

· **LETTER 220.**

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *April 23rd, 1815.*

‘ Lord Wentworth died last week. The bulk of
‘ his property (from seven to eight thousand per ann.)
‘ is entailed on Lady Milbanke and Lady Byron. The
‘ first is gone to take possession in Leicestershire, and
‘ attend the funeral, &c. this day.

‘ I have mentioned the facts of the settlement of
‘ Lord W.’s property, because the newspapers, with
‘ their usual accuracy, have been making all kinds of
‘ blunders in their statement. His will is just as ex-
‘ pected—the principal part settled on Lady Milbanke
‘ (now Noel) and Bell, and a separate estate left for
‘ sale to pay debts (which are not great) and legacies
‘ to his natural son and daughter.

‘ Mrs. *’s tragedy was last night damned. They
‘ may bring it on again, and probably will; but
‘ damned it was,—not a word of the last act audible.
‘ I went (*malgré* that I ought to have stayed at home in
‘ sackcloth for unc., but I could not resist the *first*
‘ night of anything) to a private and quiet nook of my
‘ private box, and witnessed the whole process. The
‘ first three acts, with transient gushes of applause,
‘ oozed patiently but heavily on. I must say it was
‘ badly acted, particularly by *’, who was groaned
‘ upon in the third act,—something about “horror—
‘ such a horror” was the cause. Well, the fourth
‘ act became as muddy and turbid as need be; but the
‘ fifth—what Garrick used to call (like a fool) the *con-*
‘ *coction* of a play—the fifth act stuck fast at the King’s
‘ prayer. You know he says, “he never went to bed
‘ without saying them, and did not like to omit them
‘ now.” But he was no sooner upon his knees, than
‘ the audience got upon their legs—the damnable pit—
‘ and roared, and groaned, and hissed, and whistled.
‘ Well, that was choked a little; but the ruffian-scene—
‘ the penitent peasantry—and killing the Bishop and
‘ Princes—oh, it was all over. The curtain fell upon
‘ unheard actors, and the announcement attempted
‘ by Kean for Monday was equally ineffectual. Mrs.
‘ Bartley was so frightened, that, though the people
‘ were tolerably quiet, the Epilogue was quite inau-
‘ dible to half the house. In short,—you know all. I
‘ clapped till my hands were skinless, and so did Sir
‘ James Mackintosh, who was with me in the box.
‘ All the world were in the house, from the Jerseys,
‘ Greys, &c. &c. downwards. But it would not do.
‘ It is, after all, not an *acting* play; good language,
‘ but no power. * * * Women (saving

‘ Joanna Baillie) cannot write tragedy ; they have not
 ‘ seen enough nor felt enough of life for it. I think
 ‘ Semiramis or Catherine II. might have written (could
 ‘ they have been unqueened) a rare play.

‘ It is, however, a good warning not to risk or write
 ‘ tragedies. I never had much bent that way ; but if
 ‘ I had, this would have cured me.

‘ Ever, carissime Thom.,
 ‘ Thine, B.’

LETTER 221.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ May 21st, 1815.

‘ You must have thought it very odd, not to say
 ‘ ungrateful, that I made no mention of the drawings*,
 ‘ &c. when I had the pleasure of seeing you this morn-
 ‘ ing. The fact is, that till this moment I had not seen
 ‘ them, nor heard of their arrival : they were carried
 ‘ up into the library, where I have not been till just
 ‘ now, and no intimation given to me of their coming.
 ‘ The present is so very magnificent, that—in short,
 ‘ I leave Lady Byron to thank you for it herself, and
 ‘ merely send this to apologise for a piece of apparent
 ‘ and unintentional neglect on my own part.

‘ Yours, &c.’

LETTER 222.

TO MR. MOORE†.

‘ 13, Piccadilly Terrace, June 12th, 1815.

‘ I have nothing to offer in behalf of my late silence,
 ‘ except the most inveterate and ineffable laziness ; but
 ‘ I am too supine to invent a lie, or I *certainly* should,
 ‘ being ashamed of the truth. K * *, I hope, has ap-

* Mr. Murray had presented Lady Byron with twelve drawings, by Stothard, from Lord Byron's Poems.

† This and the following letter were addressed to me in Ireland, whither I had gone about the middle of the preceding month.

' ceased your magnanimous indignation at his blun-
 ' ders. I wished and wish you were in the Committee,
 ' with all my heart*. It seems so hopeless a busi-
 ' ness, that the company of a friend would be quite
 ' consoling,—but more of this when we meet. In the
 ' mean time, you are entreated to prevail upon Mrs.
 ' Esterre to engage herself. I believe she has been
 ' written to, but your influence, in person or proxy,
 ' would probably go further than our proposals. What
 ' they are, I know not; all *my* new function consists
 ' in listening to the despair of Cavendish Bradshaw,
 ' the hopes of Kinnaird, the wishes of Lord Essex, the
 ' complaints of Whitbread, and the calculations of
 ' Peter Moore,—all of which, and whom, seem totally
 ' at variance. C. Bradshaw wants to light the theatre
 ' with *gas*, which may, perhaps (if the vulgar be be-
 ' lieved), poison half the audience, and all the *Dramatis*
 ' *Personæ*. Essex has endeavoured to persuade K * *
 ' not to get drunk, the consequence of which is, that
 ' he has never been sober since. Kinnaird, with equal
 ' success, would have convinced Raymond that he,
 ' the said Raymond, had too much salary. Whitbread
 ' wants us to assess the pit another sixpence,—a d—d
 ' insidious proposition,—which will end in an O. P.
 ' combustion. To crown all, R * *, the auctioneer,
 ' has the impudence to be displeased, because he has
 ' no dividend. The villain is a proprietor of shares,
 ' and a long-lunged orator in the meetings. I hear he
 ' has prophesied our incapacity,—“a foregone conclu-

* He had lately become one of the members of the Sub-Committee (consisting, besides himself, of the persons mentioned in this letter), who had taken upon themselves the management of Drury-lane Theatre; and it had been his wish, on the first construction of the Committee, that I should be one of his colleagues. To some mistake in the mode of conveying this proposal to me, he alludes in the preceding sentence.

‘ sion,” whereof I hope to give him signal proofs before we are done.

‘ Will you give us an opera? No, I’ll be sworn; but I wish you would.

‘ To go on with the poetical world, Walter Scott has gone back to Scotland. Murray, the bookseller, has been cruelly cudgelled of misbegotten knaves, “in Kendal green,” at Newington Butts, in his way home from a purlieu dinner,—and robbed—would you believe it?—of three or four bonds of forty pound a-piece, and a seal-ring of his grandfather’s, worth a million! This is his version,—but others opine that D’Israeli, with whom he dined, knocked him down with his last publication, “the Quarrels of Authors,” in a dispute about copyright. Be that as it may, the newspapers have teemed with his “*injuria formæ*,” and he has been embrocated and invisible to all but the apothecary ever since.

‘ Lady B. is better than three months advanced in her progress towards maternity, and, we hope, likely to go well through with it. We have been very little out this season, as I wish to keep her quiet in her present situation. Her father and mother have changed their names to Noel, in compliance with Lord Wentworth’s will, and in complaisance to the property bequeathed by him.

‘ I hear that you have been gloriously received by the Irish,—and so you ought. But don’t let them kill you with claret and kindness at the national dinner in your honour, which, I hear and hope, is in contemplation. If you will tell me the day, I’ll get drunk myself on this side of the water, and waft you an applauding hiccup over the Channel.

‘ Of politics, we have nothing but the yell for war;

‘ and C * * h is preparing his head for the pike, on
 ‘ which we shall see it carried before he has done.
 ‘ The loan has made everybody sulky. I hear often
 ‘ from Paris, but in direct contradiction to the home
 ‘ statements of our hirelings. Of domestic doings,
 ‘ there has been nothing since Lady D * *. Not a
 ‘ divorce stirring,—but a good many in embryo, in the
 ‘ shape of marriages.

‘ I enclose you an epistle received this morning
 ‘ from I know not whom; but I think it will amuse
 ‘ you. The writer must be a rare fellow*.

‘ P. S. A gentleman named D’Alton (not your Dal-
 ‘ ton) has sent me a National Poem called “Dermid.”
 ‘ The same cause which prevented my writing to you
 ‘ operated against my wish to write to him an epistle
 ‘ of thanks. If you see him, will you make all kinds
 ‘ of fine speeches for me, and tell him that I am the
 ‘ laziest and most ungrateful of mortals?

‘ A word more;—don’t let Sir John Stevenson (as
 ‘ an evidence on trials for copyright, &c.) talk about
 ‘ the price of your next Poem, or they will come upon
 ‘ you for the *Property Tax* for it. I am serious, and
 ‘ have just heard a long story of the rascally tax-men

* The following is the enclosure here referred to.

‘ *Darlington, June 3rd, 1815.*

‘ My Lord,

‘ I have lately purchased a set of your works, and am quite vexed
 ‘ that you have not cancelled the Ode to Buonaparte. It certainly was
 ‘ prematurely written, without thought or reflection. Providence has
 ‘ now brought him to reign [over millions again, while the same Provi-
 ‘ dence keeps as it were in a garrison another potentate, who, in the
 ‘ language of Mr. Burke, “he hurled from his throne.” See if you can-
 ‘ not make amends for your folly, and consider that, in almost every
 ‘ respect, human nature is the same, in every clime and in every period,
 ‘ and don’t act the part of a *foolish boy*.—Let not Englishmen talk of the
 ‘ stretch of tyrants, while the torrents of blood shed in the East Indies
 ‘ cry aloud to Heaven for retaliation. Learn, good sir, not to cast the
 ‘ first stone. I remain your lordship’s servant,

‘ J, R * *.

‘ making Scott pay for his. So, take care. Three
‘ hundred is a devil of a deduction out of three thou-
‘ sand.’

LETTER 223.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ July 7th, 1814.

‘ “Grata superveniet,” &c. &c. I had written to
‘ you again, but burnt the letter, because I began to
‘ think you seriously hurt at my indolence, and did
‘ not know how the buffoonery it contained might be
‘ taken. In the meantime, I have yours, and all is
‘ well.

‘ I had given over all hopes of yours. By-the-by,
‘ my “grata superveniet” should be in the present
‘ tense; for I perceive it looks now as if it applied to
‘ this present scrawl reaching you, whereas it is to the
‘ receipt of thy Kilkenny epistle that I have tacked
‘ that venerable sentiment.

‘ Poor Whitbread died yesterday morning,—a sud-
‘ den and severe loss. His health had been wavering,
‘ but so fatal an attack was not apprehended. He
‘ dropped down, and I believe never spoke afterwards.
‘ I perceive Perry attributes his death to Drury-lane,
‘ —a consolatory encouragement to the new Commit-
‘ tee. I have no doubt that * *, who is of a plethoric
‘ habit, will be bled immediately; and as I have, since
‘ my marriage, lost much of my paleness, and—“hor-
‘ resco referens” (for I hate even *moderate* fat)—that
‘ happy slenderness, to which, when I first knew you,
‘ I had attained, I by no means sit easy under this dis-
‘ pensation of the Morning Chronicle. Every one
‘ must regret the loss of Whitbread; he was surely a
‘ great and very good man.

‘ Paris is taken for the second time. I presume it,

‘ for the future, will have an anniversary capture. In
‘ the late battles, like all the world, I have lost a con-
‘ nexion,—poor Frederick Howard, the best of his race.
‘ I had little intercourse, of late years, with his family,
‘ but I never saw or heard but good of him. Hob-
‘ house’s brother is killed. In short, the havoc has
‘ not left a family out of its tender mercies.

‘ Every hope of a republic is over, and we must go
‘ on under the old system. But I am sick at heart of
‘ politics and slaughters; and the luck which Provi-
‘ dence is pleased to lavish on Lord Castlereagh is
‘ only a proof of the little value the gods set upon
‘ prosperity, when they permit such * * *s as he and
‘ that drunken corporal, old Blucher, to bully their
‘ betters. From this, however, Wellington should be
‘ excepted. He *is* a man,—and the Scipio of our
‘ Hannibal. However, he may thank the Russian
‘ frosts, which destroyed the *real élite* of the French
‘ army, for the successes of Waterloo.

‘ La! Moore—how you blasphememes about “Par-
‘ nassus” and “Moses!” I am ashamed for you.
‘ Won’t you do anything for the drama? We beseech
‘ an Opera. Kinnaird’s blunder was partly mine. I
‘ wanted you of all things in the Committee, and so
‘ did he. But we are now glad you were wiser; for
‘ it is, I doubt, a bitter business.

‘ When shall we see you in England? Sir Ralph
‘ Noel (*late* Milbanke—he don’t promise to be *late* Noel
‘ in a hurry), finding that one man can’t inhabit two
‘ houses, has given his place in the north to me for a
‘ habitation; and there Lady B. threatens to be brought
‘ to bed in November. Sir R. and my Lady Mother
‘ are to quarter at Kirby—Lord Wentworth’s that was.
‘ Perhaps you and Mrs. Moore will pay us a visit at

‘ Seaham in the course of the autumn. If so, you and
‘ I (*without* our *wives*) will take a *lark* to Edinburgh
‘ and embrace Jeffrey. It is not much above one hun-
‘ dred miles from us. But all this, and other high
‘ matters we will discuss at meeting, which I hope will
‘ be on your return. We don’t leave town till August.
‘ Ever, &c.’

LETTER 224.

TO MR. SOTHEY.

‘ Sept. 15th, 1815. *Piccadilly Terrace.*

‘ Dear Sir,

‘ “ Ivan ” is accepted, and will be put in pro-
‘ gress on Kean’s arrival.

‘ The theatrical gentlemen have a confident hope of
‘ its success. I know not that any alterations for the
‘ stage will be necessary; if any, they will be trifling,
‘ and you shall be duly apprized. I would suggest
‘ that you should not attend any except the latter
‘ rehearsals—the managers have requested me to state
‘ this to you. You can see them, viz., Dibdin and Rae,
‘ whenever you please, and I will do anything you
‘ wish to be done on your suggestion, in the mean
‘ time.

‘ Mrs. Mardyn is not yet out, and nothing can be
‘ determined till she has made her appearance—I
‘ mean as to her capacity for the part you mention,
‘ which I take it for granted is not in Ivan—as I think
‘ Ivan may be performed very well without her. But
‘ of that hereafter. Ever yours, very truly,

‘ BYRON.’

‘ P.S. You will be glad to hear that the season has
‘ begun uncommonly well—great and constant houses
‘ —the performers in much harmony with the Com-
‘ mittee and one another, and as much good-humour

‘ as can be preserved in such complicated and extensive interests as the Drury-lane proprietary.’

TO MR. SOTHEY.

‘ *September 25th, 1815.*

‘ Dear Sir,

‘ I think it would be advisable for you to see the acting-managers when convenient, as there must be points on which you will want to confer; the objection I stated was merely on the part of the performers, and is *general* and not *particular* to this instance. I thought it as well to mention it at once—and some of the rehearsals you will doubtless see, notwithstanding.

‘ Rae, I rather think, has his eye on Naritzin for himself. He is a more popular performer than Bartley, and certainly the cast will be stronger with him in it; besides, he is one of the managers, and will feel doubly interested if he can act in both capacities. Mrs. Bartley will be Petrowna;—as to the Empress, I know not what to say or think. The truth is, we are not amply furnished with tragic women; but make the best of those we have, you can take your choice of them. We have all great hopes of the success—on which, setting aside other considerations, we are particularly anxious, as being the first tragedy to be brought out since the old Committee.

‘ By the way—I have a charge against you. As the great Mr. Dennis roared out on a similar occasion—“ By G—d, *that* is *my* thunder!” so do I exclaim, “ *This* is *my* lightning!” I allude to a speech of Ivan’s, in the scene with Petrowna and the Empress, where the thought and almost expression are similar to Conrad’s in the 3d Canto of the “ Corsair.” I,

‘ however, do not say this to accuse you, but to exempt
 ‘ myself from suspicion*, as there is a priority of six
 ‘ months’ publication, on my part, between the appear-
 ‘ ance of that composition and of your tragedies.

‘ George Lambe meant to have written to you. If
 ‘ you don’t like to confer with the managers at present,
 ‘ I will attend to your wishes—so state them. Yours
 ‘ very truly, ‘ BYRON.’

LETTER 226.

TO MR. TAYLOR.

‘ 13, Terrace, Piccadilly, September 25th, 1815.

‘ Dear Sir,

‘ I am sorry you should feel uneasy at what has
 ‘ by no means troubled me†. If your Editor, his
 ‘ correspondents, and readers, are amused, I have no
 ‘ objection to be the theme of all the ballads he can
 ‘ find room for,—provided his lucubrations are con-
 ‘ fined to *me* only:

‘ It is a long time since things of this kind have

* Notwithstanding this precaution of the poet, the coincidence in question was, but a few years after, triumphantly cited in support of the sweeping charge of plagiarism brought against him by some scribblers. The following are Mr. Sotheby’s lines:—

‘ And I have leapt
 ‘ In transport from my flinty couch, to welcome
 ‘ The thunder as it burst upon my roof,
 ‘ And beckon’d to the lightning, as it flash’d
 ‘ And sparkled on these fetters.’

I have since been informed by Mr. Sotheby that, though not published, these lines had been written long before the appearance of Lord Byron’s poem.

† Mr. Taylor having inserted in the Sun newspaper (of which he was then chief proprietor) a sonnet to Lord Byron, in return for a present which his lordship had sent him of a handsomely bound copy of all his works, there appeared in the same journal, on the following day (from the pen of some person who had acquired a control over the paper), a parody upon this sonnet, containing some disrespectful allusion to Lady Byron; and it is to this circumstance, which Mr. Taylor had written to explain, that the above letter, so creditable to the feelings of the noble husband, refers.

‘ ceased to “ fright me from my propriety;” nor do I
 ‘ know any similar attack which would induce me to
 ‘ turn again,—unless it involved those connected with
 ‘ me, whose qualities, I hope, are such as to exempt
 ‘ them in the eyes of those who bear no good-will to
 ‘ myself. In such a case, supposing it to occur—to
 ‘ *reverse* the saying of Dr. Johnson,—“ what the law
 ‘ could not do for me, I would do for myself,” be the
 ‘ consequences what they might.

‘ I return you, with many thanks, Colman and the
 ‘ letters. The Poems, I hope, you intended me to
 ‘ keep;—at least, I shall do so, till I hear the con-
 ‘ trary. Very truly yours.’

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Sept. 25th, 1815.*

‘ Will you publish the Drury-lane “ Magpie? ”
 ‘ or, what is more, will you give fifty, or even forty,
 ‘ pounds for the copyright of the said? I have under-
 ‘ taken to ask you this question on behalf of the trans-
 ‘ lator, and wish you would. We can’t get so much
 ‘ for him by ten pounds from anybody else, and I,
 ‘ knowing your magnificence, would be glad of an
 ‘ answer. Ever, &c.’

LETTER 226.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *September 27th, 1815.*

‘ That’s right, and splendid, and becoming a pub-
 ‘ lisher of high degree. Mr. Concanen (the translator)
 ‘ will be delighted, and pay his washerwoman; and,
 ‘ in reward for your bountiful behaviour in this in-
 ‘ stance, I won’t ask you to publish any more for
 ‘ Drury-lane, or any lane whatever again. You will
 ‘ have no tragedy or anything else from me, I assure

‘ you, and may think yourself lucky in having got rid
 ‘ of me, for good and all, without more damage. But
 ‘ I’ll tell you what we will do for you,—act Sotheby’s
 ‘ Ivan, which will succeed; and then your present and
 ‘ next impression of the dramas of that dramatic gen-
 ‘ tleman will be expedited to your heart’s content; and
 ‘ if there is anything very good, you shall have the
 ‘ refusal; but you sha’n’t have any more requests.

‘ Sotheby has got a thought, and almost the words,
 ‘ from the Third Canto of the Corsair, which, you
 ‘ know, was published six months before his tragedy.
 ‘ It is from the storm in Conrad’s cell. I have written
 ‘ to Mr. Sotheby to claim it; and, as Dennis roared
 ‘ out of the pit, “ By G—d, *that’s my* thunder!” so do
 ‘ I, and will I, exclaim, “ By G—d, that’s *my light-*
 ‘ *ning!*” that electrical fluid being, in fact, the subject
 ‘ of the said passage.

‘ You will have a print of Fanny Kelly, in the Maid,
 ‘ to prefix, which is honestly worth twice the money
 ‘ you have given for the MS. Pray what did you do
 ‘ with the note I gave you about Mungo Park?

‘ Ever, &c.’

LETTER 227.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ 13, Terrace, Piccadilly, October 28th, 1815.

‘ You are, it seems, in England again, as I am to
 ‘ hear from everybody but yourself; and I suppose you
 ‘ punctilious, because I did not answer your last Irish
 ‘ letter. When did you leave the “ swate country?”
 ‘ Never mind, I forgive you;—a strong proof of—I
 ‘ know not what—to give the lie to—

‘ He never pardons who hath done the wrong.’

‘ You have written to * *. You have also written

‘ to Perry, who intimates hope of an Opera from you.
‘ Coleridge has promised a Tragedy. Now, if you
‘ keep Perry’s word, and Coleridge keeps his own, Drury-
‘ lane will be set up ; and, sooth to say, it is in grievous
‘ want of such a lift. We began at speed, and are
‘ blown already. When I say “we,” I mean Kinnaird,
‘ who is the “all in all sufficient,” and can count,
‘ which none of the rest of the Committee can.

‘ It is really very good fun, as far as the daily and
‘ nightly stir of these strutters and fretters go ; and,
‘ if the concern could be brought to pay a shilling in
‘ the pound, would do much credit to the management.
‘ Mr. — has an accepted tragedy, * * * *, whose
‘ first scene is in his sleep (I don’t mean the author’s).
‘ It was forwarded to us as a prodigious favourite of
‘ Kean’s ; but the said Kean, upon interrogation, denies
‘ his eulogy, and protests against his part. How it will
‘ end, I know not.

‘ I say so much about the theatre, because there is
‘ nothing else alive in London at this season. All the
‘ world are out of it, except us, who remain to lie in,—
‘ in December, or perhaps earlier. Lady B. is very
‘ ponderous and prosperous, apparently, and I wish it
‘ well over.

‘ There is a play before me from a personage who
‘ signs himself “Hibernicus.” The hero is Malachi,
‘ the Irishman and king ; and the villain and usurper,
‘ Turgesius, the Dane. The conclusion is fine. Tur-
‘ gesius is chained by the leg (*vide* stage direction)
‘ to a pillar on the stage ; and King Malachi makes
‘ him a speech, not unlike Lord Castlereagh’s about
‘ the balance of power and the lawfulness of legiti-
‘ macy, which puts Turgesius into a frenzy—as Castle-
‘ reagh’s would, if his audience was chained by the leg.

‘ He draws a dagger and rushes at the orator ; but,
‘ finding himself at the end of his tether, he sticks it
‘ into his own carcass, and dies, saying, he has fulfilled
‘ a prophecy.

‘ Now, this is *serious, downright matter of fact*, and
‘ the gravest part of a tragedy which is not intended
‘ for burlesque. I tell it you for the honour of Ireland.
‘ The writer hopes it will be represented:—but what is
‘ Hope? nothing but the paint on the face of Existence;
‘ the least touch of Truth rubs it off, and then we see
‘ what a hollow-cheeked harlot we have got hold of.
‘ I am not sure that I have not said this last superfine
‘ reflection before. But never mind;—it will do for the
‘ tragedy of Turgesius, to which I can append it.

‘ Well, but how dost thou do? thou bard, not of a
‘ thousand, but three thousand! I wish your friend,
‘ Sir John Piano-forte, had kept that to himself, and
‘ not made it public at the trial of the song-seller in
‘ Dublin. I tell you why; it is a liberal thing for
‘ Longman to do, and honourable for you to obtain; but
‘ it will set all the “ hungry and dinnerless, lank-jawed
‘ judges” upon the fortunate author. But they be d—d!
‘ —the “ Jeffrey and the Moore together are confident
‘ against the world in ink!” By the way, if poor
‘ C * * e—who is a man of wonderful talent, and in
‘ distress*, and about to publish two vols. of Poesy and
‘ Biography, and who has been worse used by the critics
‘ than ever we were—will you, if he comes out, pro-
‘ mise me to review him favourably in the E. R.?
‘ Praise him I think you must, but you will also praise

* It is but justice both to ‘ him that gave and him that took ’ to mention that the noble poet, at this time, with a delicacy which enhanced the kindness, advanced to the eminent person here spoken of, on the credit of some work he was about to produce, one hundred pounds.

‘ him *well*,—of all things the most difficult. It will be
‘ the making of him.

‘ This must be a secret between you and me, as
‘ Jeffrey might not like such a project ;—nor, indeed,
‘ might C. himself like it. But I do think he only
‘ wants a pioneer and a sparkle or two to explode most
‘ gloriously. Ever yours most affectionately, ‘ B.’

‘ P.S. This is a sad scribbler’s letter ; but the next
‘ shall be “ more of this world.” ’

As, after this letter, there occur but few allusions to his connexion with the Drury-lane Management, I shall here avail myself of the opportunity to give some extracts from his ‘ Detached Thoughts,’ containing recollections of his short acquaintance with the interior of the theatre.

‘ When I belonged to the Drury-lane Committee,
‘ and was one of the Sub-Committee of Management,
‘ the number of *plays* upon the shelves were about *five*
‘ hundred. Conceiving that amongst these there must
‘ be *some* of merit, in person and by proxy I caused an
‘ investigation. I do not think that of those which I
‘ saw there was one which could be conscientiously
‘ tolerated. There never were such things as most of
‘ them! Mathurin was very kindly recommended to
‘ me by Walter Scott, to whom I had recourse, firstly,
‘ in the hope that he would do something for us him-
‘ self ; and secondly, in my despair, that he would point
‘ out to us any young (or old) writer of promise. Ma-
‘ thurin sent his *Bertram* and a letter *without* his
‘ address, so that at first I could give him no answer.
‘ When I at last hit upon his residence, I sent him a
‘ favourable answer and something more substantial.

‘ His play succeeded ; but I was at that time absent
‘ from England.

‘ I tried Coleridge too ; but he had nothing feasible
‘ in hand at the time. Mr. Sotheby obligingly offered
‘ *all* his tragedies, and I pledged myself, and notwith-
‘ standing many squabbles with my Committed Bre-
‘ thren, did get “ Ivan ” accepted, read, and the parts
‘ distributed. But, lo ! in the very heart of the matter,
‘ upon some *tepidness* on the part of Kean, or warmth
‘ on that of the author, Sotheby withdrew his play.
‘ Sir J. B. Burgess did also present four tragedies and
‘ a farce, and I moved green-room and Sub-Committee,
‘ but they would not.

‘ Then the scenes I had to go through !—the authors,
‘ and the authoresses, and the milliners, and the wild
‘ Irishmen,—the people from Brighton, from Black-
‘ wall, from Chatham, from Cheltenham, from Dublin,
‘ from Dundee,—who came in upon me ! to all of whom
‘ it was proper to give a civil answer, and a hearing, and
‘ a reading. Mrs. * * *’s father, an Irish dancing-master
‘ of sixty years, calling upon me to request to play
‘ Archer, dressed in silk stockings on a frosty morning
‘ to show his legs (which were certainly good and Irish
‘ for his age, and had been still better),—Miss Emma
‘ Somebody, with a play entitled “ The Bandit of Bo-
‘ hemia,” or some such title or production,—Mr.
‘ O’Higgins, then resident at Richmond, with an Irish
‘ tragedy, in which the unities could not fail to be
‘ observed, for the protagonist was chained by the leg
‘ to a pillar during the chief part of the performance.
‘ He was a wild man, of a salvage appearance, and
‘ the difficulty of *not* laughing at him was only to be
‘ got over by reflecting upon the probable consequences
‘ of such cachinnation.

‘ As I am really a civil and polite person, and *do*
 ‘ hate giving pain when it can be avoided, I sent them
 ‘ up to Douglas Kinnaird,—who is a man of business,
 ‘ and sufficiently ready with a negative,—and left
 ‘ them to settle with him; and as the beginning of
 ‘ next year I went abroad, I have since been little
 ‘ aware of the progress of the theatres.

‘ Players are said to be an impracticable people.
 ‘ They are so; but I managed to steer clear of any
 ‘ disputes with them, and excepting one debate * with
 ‘ the elder Byrne about Miss Smith’s *pas de*—(some-
 ‘ thing—I forget the technicals),—I do not remember
 ‘ any litigation of my own. I used to protect Miss
 ‘ Smith, because she was like Lady Jane Harley in the
 ‘ face, and likenesses go a great way with me. In-
 ‘ deed, in general, I left such things to my more bust-
 ‘ ling colleagues, who used to reprove me seriously for
 ‘ not being able to take such things in hand without
 ‘ buffooning with the histrions, or throwing things
 ‘ into confusion by treating light matters with levity.

‘ Then the Committee!—then the Sub-committee!—
 ‘ we were but few, but never agreed. There was Peter

* A correspondent of one of the monthly Miscellanies gives the following account of this incident:—

‘ During Lord Byron’s administration, a ballet was invented by the
 ‘ elder Byrne, in which Miss Smith (since Mrs. Oscar Byrne) had a *pas*
 ‘ *seul*. This the lady wished to remove to a later period in the ballet.
 ‘ The ballet-master refused, and the lady swore she would not dance it at
 ‘ all. The music incidental to the dance began to play, and the lady
 ‘ walked off the stage. Both parties flounced into the green-room to lay
 ‘ the case before Lord Byron, who happened to be the only person in that
 ‘ apartment. The noble committee-man made an award in favour of
 ‘ Miss Smith, and both complainants rushed angrily out of the room at
 ‘ the instant of my entering it. “ If you had come a minute sooner,”
 ‘ said Lord Byron, “ you would have heard a curious matter decided on
 ‘ by me: a question of dancing!—by me,” added he, looking down at the
 ‘ lame limb, “ whom Nature from my birth has prohibited from taking
 ‘ a single step.” His countenance fell after he had uttered this, as if he
 ‘ had said too much; and for a moment there was an embarrassing silence
 ‘ on both sides.’

‘ Moore who contradicted Kinnaird; and Kinnaird
 ‘ who contradicted every body: then our two ma-
 ‘ nagers, Rae and Dibdin; and our secretary, Ward!
 ‘ and yet we were all very zealous and in earnest to
 ‘ do good and so forth. * * * * furnished us with pro-
 ‘ logues to our revived old English plays; but was
 ‘ not pleased with me for complimenting him as “the
 ‘ Upton” of our theatre (Mr. Upton is or was the poet
 ‘ who writes the songs for Astley’s), and almost gave
 ‘ up prologuing in consequence.

‘ In the pantomime of 1815-16, there was a repre-
 ‘ sentation of the masquerade of 1814 given by “us
 ‘ youth” of Watier’s Club to Wellington and Co.
 ‘ Douglas Kinnaird and one or two others, with myself,
 ‘ put on masques, and went on the stage with the
 ‘ *οἱ πολλοί*, to see the effect of a theatre from the
 ‘ stage:—it is very grand. Douglas danced among
 ‘ the figuranti too, and they were puzzled to find out
 ‘ who we were, as being more than their number. It
 ‘ was odd enough that Douglas Kinnaird and I should
 ‘ have been both at the *real* masquerade, and after-
 ‘ wards in the mimic one of the same, on the stage of
 ‘ Drury-lane theatre.’

LETTER 228.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *Terrace, Piccadilly, October 31st, 1815.*

‘ I have not been able to ascertain precisely the
 ‘ time of duration of the stock market; but I believe
 ‘ it is a good time for selling out, and I hope so.
 ‘ First, because I shall see you; and, next, because I
 ‘ shall receive certain monies on behalf of Lady B.,
 ‘ the which will materially conduce to my comfort,—
 ‘ I wanting (as the duns say) “to make up a sum.”

‘ Yesterday, I dined out with a large-ish party, where

‘ were Sheridan and Colman, Harry Harris of C. G.
‘ and his brother, Sir Gilbert Heathcote, Dr. Kinnaird,
‘ and others, of note and notoriety. Like other parties
‘ of the kind, it was first silent, then talky, then argu-
‘ mentative, then disputatious, then unintelligible, then
‘ altogether, then inarticulate, and then drunk. When
‘ we had reached the last step of this glorious ladder,
‘ it was difficult to get down again without stumbling;
‘ and to crown all, Kinnaird and I had to conduct
‘ Sheridan down a d—d corkscrew staircase, which
‘ had certainly been constructed before the discovery
‘ of fermented liquors, and to which no legs, however
‘ crooked, could possibly accommodate themselves.
‘ We deposited him safe at home, where his man,
‘ evidently used to the business, waited to receive him
‘ in the hall.

‘ Both he and Colman were, as usual, very good ;
‘ but I carried away much wine, and the wine had
‘ previously carried away my memory ; so that all was
‘ hiccup and happiness for the last hour or so, and I
‘ am not impregnated with any of the conversation:
‘ Perhaps you heard of a late answer of Sheridan to
‘ the watchman who found him bereft of that “ divine
‘ particle of air,” called reason, * * *. He,
‘ the watchman, found Sherry in the street, fuddled
‘ and bewildered, and almost insensible. “ Who are
‘ *you*, sir?”—no answer. “ What’s your name?”—a
‘ hiccup. “ What’s your name?”—Answer, in a slow,
‘ deliberate, and impassive tone—“ Wilberforce!!!”
‘ Is not that Sherry all over?—and, to my mind, excel-
‘ lent. Poor fellow, *his* very dregs are better than the
‘ “ first sprightly runnings ” of others.

‘ My paper is full, and I have a grievous headache.

‘ P.S. Lady B. is in full progress. Next month

‘ will bring to light (with the aid of “ Juno Lucina,
‘ *fer opem*,” or rather *opes*, for the last are most
‘ wanted) the tenth wonder of the world—Gil Blas
‘ being the eighth, and he (my son’s father) the ninth.’

LETTER 229,

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ November 4th, 1815.

‘ Had you not bewildered my head with the
‘ “stocks,” your letter would have been answered
‘ directly. Hadn’t I to go to the city? and hadn’t I
‘ to remember what to ask when I got there? and
‘ hadn’t I forgotten it?

‘ I should be undoubtedly delighted to see you;
‘ but I don’t like to urge against your reasons my own
‘ inclinations. Come you must soon, for stay you
‘ won’t. I know you of old;—you have been too much
‘ leavened with London to keep long out of it.

‘ Lewis is going to Jamaica to suck his sugar-canes.
‘ He sails in two days; I enclose you his farewell note.
‘ I saw him last night at D. L. T. for the last time
‘ previous to his voyage. Poor fellow! he is really a
‘ good man—an excellent man—he left me his walk-
‘ ing-stick and a pot of preserved ginger. I shall
‘ never eat the last without tears in my eyes, it is so
‘ hot. We have had a devil of a row among our
‘ ballerinas: Miss Smith has been wronged about a
‘ hornpipe. The Committee have interfered; but
‘ Byrne, the d—d ballet-master, won’t budge a step.
‘ I am furious, so is George Lamb. Kinnaird is very
‘ glad, because—he don’t know why; and I am very
‘ sorry, for the same reason. To-day I dine with
‘ Kd.—we are to have Sheridan and Colman again;
‘ and to-morrow, once more, at Sir Gilbert Heathcote’s.

‘ Leigh Hunt has written a *real good* and *very origi-*

‘ *nal Poem*, which I think will be a great hit. You
 ‘ can have no notion how very well it is written, nor
 ‘ should I, had I not redde it. As to us, Tom—eh,
 ‘ when art thou out? If you think the verses worth
 ‘ it, I would rather they were embalmed in the Irish
 ‘ Melodies, than scattered abroad in a separate song—
 ‘ much rather. But when are thy great things out?
 ‘ I mean the Po.of Pos—thy Shah Nameh. It is very
 ‘ kind in Jeffrey to like the Hebrew Melodies. Some
 ‘ of the fellows here preferred Sternhold and Hopkins,
 ‘ and said so;—“the fiend receive their souls therefor!”

‘ I must go and dress for dinner. Poor, dear Murat,
 ‘ what an end! You know, I suppose, that his white
 ‘ plume used to be a rallying point in battle, like
 ‘ Henry IV.’s. He refused a confessor and a bandage;
 ‘ so would neither suffer his soul or body to be band-
 ‘ aged. You shall have more to-morrow or next day.

‘ Ever, &c.’

LETTER 230.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *November 4th, 1815.*

‘ When you have been enabled to form an opinion
 on Mr. Coleridge’s MS.* you will oblige me by
 ‘ returning it, as, in fact, I have no authority to let it
 ‘ out of my hands. I think most highly of it, and feel
 ‘ anxious that you should be the publisher; but if you
 ‘ are not, I do not despair of finding those who will.

‘ I have written to Mr. Leigh Hunt, stating your
 ‘ willingness to treat with him; which, when I saw
 ‘ you, I understood you to be. Terms and time, I
 ‘ leave to his pleasure and your discernment; but this
 ‘ I will say, that I think it the *safest* thing you ever
 ‘ engaged in. I speak to you as a man of business:

* A Tragedy entitled, I think, Zopolia.

‘ were I to talk to you as a reader or a critic, I should
‘ say, it was a very wonderful and beautiful perform-
‘ ance, with just enough of fault to make its beauties
‘ more remarked and remarkable.

‘ And now to the last—my own, which I feel
‘ ashamed of after the others :—publish or not as you
‘ like, I don’t care *one damn*. If *you* don’t, no one else
‘ shall, and I never thought or dreamed of it, except
‘ as one in the collection. If it is worth being in the
‘ fourth volume, put it there and nowhere else ; and if
‘ not, put it in the fire. Yours, ‘ N.’

Those embarrassments which, from a review of his affairs previous to the marriage, he had clearly foreseen would, before long, overtake him, were not slow in realizing his worst omens. The increased expenses induced by his new mode of life, with but very little increase of means to meet them,—the long arrears of early pecuniary obligations, as well as the claims which had been, gradually, since then, accumulating, all pressed upon him now with collected force, and reduced him to some of the worst humiliations of poverty. He had been even driven, by the necessity of encountering such demands, to the trying expedient of parting with his books,—which circumstance coming to Mr. Murray’s ears, that gentleman instantly forwarded to him 1500*l.*, with an assurance that another sum of the same amount should be at his service in a few weeks, and that if such assistance should not be sufficient, Mr. Murray was most ready to dispose of the copyrights of all his past works for his use.

This very liberal offer Lord Byron acknowledged in the following letter.

LETTER 231.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ November 14th, 1815.

‘ I return you your bills not accepted, but certainly
 ‘ not *unhonoured*. Your present offer is a favour which
 ‘ I would accept from you, if I accepted such from any
 ‘ man. Had such been my intention, I can assure you
 ‘ I would have asked you fairly, and as freely as you
 ‘ would give ; and I cannot say more of my confidence
 ‘ or your conduct.

‘ The circumstances which induce me to part with
 ‘ my books, though sufficiently, are not *immediately*,
 ‘ pressing. I have made up my mind to them, and
 ‘ there’s an end.

‘ Had I been disposed to trespass on your kindness
 ‘ in this way, it would have been before now ; but I
 ‘ am not sorry to have an opportunity of declining it,
 ‘ as it sets my opinion of you, and indeed of human
 ‘ nature, in a different light from that in which I have
 ‘ been accustomed to consider it.

‘ Believe me very truly, &c.’

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ December 25th, 1815.

‘ I send some lines, written some time ago, and
 ‘ intended as an opening to the “ Siege of Corinth.”
 ‘ I had forgotten them, and am not sure that they had
 ‘ not better be left out now :—on that, you and your
 ‘ Synod can determine. ‘ Yours, &c.’

The following are the lines alluded to in this note. They are written in the loosest form of that rambling style of metre which his admiration of Mr. Coleridge’s “ Christabel ” led him, at this time, to adopt ; and he judged rightly, perhaps, in omitting them as the open-

ing of his Poem. They are, however, too full of spirit and character to be lost. Though breathing the thick atmosphere of Piccadilly when he wrote them, it is plain that his fancy was far away, among the sunny hills and vales of Greece; and their contrast with the tame life he was leading at the moment, but gave to his recollections a fresher spring and force.

‘ In the year since Jesus died for men,
 ‘ Eighteen hundred years and ten,
 ‘ We were a gallant company,
 ‘ Riding o’er land, and sailing o’er sea.
 ‘ Oh! but we went merrily!
 ‘ We forded the river, and clomb the high hill,
 ‘ Never our steeds for a day stood still;
 ‘ Whether we lay in the cave or the shed,
 ‘ Our sleep fell soft on the hardest bed;
 ‘ Whether we couch’d in our rough capote,
 ‘ On the rougher plank of our gliding boat,
 ‘ Or stretch’d on the beach, or our saddles spread
 ‘ As a pillow beneath the resting head,
 ‘ Fresh we woke upon the morrow:
 ‘ All our thoughts and words had scope,
 ‘ We had health, and we had hope,
 ‘ Toil and travel, but no sorrow,
 ‘ We were of all tongues and creeds;—
 ‘ Some were those who counted beads,
 ‘ Some of mosque, and some of church,
 ‘ And some, or I mis-say, of neither;
 ‘ Yet through the wide world might ye search
 ‘ Nor find a motlier crew nor blither.

‘ But some are dead, and some are gone,
 ‘ And some are scatter’d and alone,
 ‘ And some are rebels on the hills*
 ‘ That look along Epirus’ valleys
 ‘ Where Freedom still at moments rallies,
 ‘ And pays in blood Oppression’s ills;
 ‘ And some are in a far countree,
 ‘ And some all restlessly at home;
 ‘ But never more, oh! never, we
 ‘ Shall meet to revel and to roam.

* ‘ The last tidings recently heard of Dervish (one of the Arnauts who followed me) state him to be in revolt upon the mountains, at the head of some of the bands common in that country in times of trouble.’

‘ But those hardy days flew cheerily,
 ‘ And when they now fall drearily,
 ‘ My thoughts, like swallows, skim the main,
 ‘ And bear my spirit back again
 ‘ Over the earth, and through the air,
 ‘ A wild bird, and a wanderer.
 ‘ ‘Tis this that ever wakes my strain,
 ‘ And oft, too oft, implores again
 ‘ The few who may endure my lay,
 ‘ To follow me so far away.
 ‘ Stranger—wilt thou follow now,
 ‘ And sit with me on Acro-Corinth’s brow?’

LETTER 232.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *January 5th, 1816.*

‘ I hope Mrs. M. is quite re-established. The
 ‘ little girl was born on the 10th of December last;
 ‘ her name is Augusta *Ada* (the second a very antique
 ‘ family name,—I believe not used since the reign of
 ‘ King John). She was, and is, very flourishing and
 ‘ fat, and reckoned very large for her days—squalls
 ‘ and sucks incessantly. Are you answered? Her
 ‘ mother is doing very well, and up again.

‘ I have now been married a year on the second of
 ‘ this month—heigh-ho! I have seen nobody lately
 ‘ much worth noting, except S * * and another general
 ‘ of the Gauls, once or twice at dinners out of doors.
 ‘ S * * is a fine, foreign, villanous-looking, intelligent,
 ‘ and very agreeable man; his compatriot is more of the
 ‘ *petit-maître*, and younger, but I should think not at all
 ‘ of the same intellectual calibre with the Corsican—
 ‘ which S * *, you know, is, and a cousin of Napoleon’s.

‘ Are you never to be expected in town again? To
 ‘ be sure, there is no one here of the 1500 fillers of
 ‘ hot rooms, called the fashionable world. My ap-
 ‘ proaching papa-ship detained us for advice, &c. &c.—
 ‘ though I would as soon be here as anywhere else on
 ‘ this side of the straits of Gibraltar.

‘ I would gladly—or, rather, sorrowfully—comply
‘ with your request of a dirge for the poor girl you
‘ mention *. But how can I write on one I have never
‘ seen or known? Besides, you will do it much better
‘ yourself. I could not write upon anything, without
‘ some personal experience and foundation; far less on
‘ a theme so peculiar. Now, you have both in this
‘ case; and, if you had neither, you have more imagi-
‘ nation, and would never fail.

‘ This is but a dull scrawl, and I am but a dull
‘ fellow. Just at present, I am absorbed in 500 con-
‘ tradictory contemplations, though with but one object
‘ in view—which will probably end in nothing, as most
‘ things we wish do. But never mind—as somebody
‘ says, “for the blue sky bends over all.” I only
‘ could be glad, if it bent over me where it is a little
‘ bluer; like the “skyish top of blue Olympus,” which,
‘ by the way, looked very white when I last saw it.

‘ Ever, &c.’

On reading over the foregoing letter, I was much struck by the tone of melancholy that pervaded it; and well knowing it to be the habit of the writer’s mind to seek relief, when under the pressure of any disquiet or disgust, in that sense of freedom which told him that there were homes for him elsewhere, I could perceive, I thought, in his recollections of the ‘blue Olympus,’ some return of the restless and roving spirit, which unhappiness or impatience always called up in his mind. I had, indeed, at the time when he sent me those melancholy verses, ‘There’s not a joy

* I had mentioned to him, as a subject worthy of his best powers of pathos, a melancholy event which had just occurred in my neighbourhood, and to which I have myself made allusion in one of the Sacred Melodies—‘Weep not for her.’

this world can give,' &c. felt some vague apprehensions as to the mood into which his spirits seemed to be then sinking, and, in acknowledging the receipt of the verses, thus tried to banter him out of it:—' But ' why thus on your stool of melancholy again, Master ' Stephen?—This will never do—it plays the deuce ' with all the matter-of-fact duties of life, and you ' must bid adieu to it. Youth is the only time when ' one can be melancholy with impunity. As life it- ' self grows sad and serious, we have nothing for it ' but—to be as much as possible the contrary.'

My absence from London during the whole of this year had deprived me of all opportunities of judging for myself how far the appearances of his domestic state gave promise of happiness; nor had any rumours reached me which at all inclined me to suspect that the course of his married life hitherto exhibited less smoothness than such unions, on the surface, at least, —generally wear. The strong and affectionate terms in which, soon after the marriage, he had, in some of the letters I have given, declared his own happiness—a declaration which his known frankness left me no room to question—had, in no small degree, tended to still those apprehensions which my first view of the lot he had chosen for himself awakened. I could not, however, but observe that these indications of a contented heart soon ceased. His mention of the partner of his home became more rare and formal, and there was observable, I thought, through some of his letters a feeling of unquiet and weariness that brought back all those gloomy anticipations with which I had, from the first, regarded his fate. This last letter of his, in particular, struck me as full of sad omen, and, in the course of my answer, I thus noticed to him the im-

pression it had made on me:—‘And so you are a whole year married!—

‘ It was last year I vow’d to thee
‘ That fond impossibility.

‘ Do you know, my dear B., there was a something in
‘ your last letter—a sort of unquiet mystery, as well
‘ as a want of your usual elasticity of spirits—which
‘ has hung upon my mind unpleasantly ever since. I
‘ long to be near you, that I might know how you
‘ really look and feel; for these letters tell nothing,
‘ and one word, *a quattr’occhi*, is worth whole reams
‘ of correspondence. But only *do* tell me you are
‘ happier than that letter has led me to fear, and I
‘ shall be satisfied.

It was in a few weeks after this latter communication between us that Lady Byron adopted the resolution of parting from him. She had left London about the middle of January, on a visit to her father’s house, in Leicestershire, and Lord Byron was, in a short time after, to follow her. They had parted in the utmost kindness,—she wrote him a letter, full of playfulness and affection, on the road, and, immediately on her arrival at Kirkby Mallory, her father wrote to acquaint Lord Byron that she would return to him no more. At the time when he had to stand this unexpected shock, his pecuniary embarrassments, which had been fast gathering around him during the whole of the last year (there having been no less than eight or nine executions in his house within that period), had arrived at their utmost; and at a moment when, to use his own strong expressions, he was ‘standing alone on his hearth, with his household gods shivered around him,’ he was also doomed to receive the startling intelli-

gence that the wife who had just parted with him in kindness had parted with him—for ever.

About this time the following note was written.

TO MR. ROGERS.

February 8th, 1816.

‘ Do not mistake me—I really returned your book
‘ for the reason assigned, and no other. It is too good
‘ for so careless a fellow. I have parted with all my
‘ own books, and positively won’t deprive you of so
‘ valuable “a drop of that immortal man.”

‘ I shall be very glad to see you, if you like to call,
‘ though I am at present contending with “the slings
‘ and arrows of outrageous fortune,” some of which
‘ have struck at me from a quarter whence I did not
‘ indeed expect them.—But, no matter, “there is a
‘ world elsewhere,” and I will cut my way through
‘ this as I can.

‘ If you write to Moore, will you tell him that I
‘ shall answer his letter the moment I can muster time
‘ and spirits?

‘ Ever yours,

‘ BN.’

The rumours of the separation did not reach me till more than a week afterwards, when I immediately wrote to him thus:—‘ I am most anxious to hear
‘ from you, though I doubt whether I ought to mention the subject on which I am so anxious. If, however, what I heard last night, in a letter from town, be true, you will know immediately what I allude to, and just communicate as much or as little upon the subject as you think proper;—only *something* I should like to know, as soon as possible, from yourself, in order to set my mind at rest with respect to the truth

‘ or falsehood of the report.’ The following is his answer.

LETTER 233..

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *February 29th, 1816.*

‘ I have not answered your letter for a time ; and,
‘ at present, the reply to part of it might extend to
‘ such a length, that I shall delay it till it can be made
‘ in person, and then I will shorten it as much as I
‘ can.

‘ In the meantime, I am at war “ with all the world
‘ and his wife ;” or rather, “ all the world and *my*
‘ wife ” are at war with me, and have not yet crushed
‘ me,—whatever they *may* do. I don’t know that in
‘ the course of a hair-breadth existence I was ever, at
‘ home or abroad, in a situation so completely uproot-
‘ ing of present pleasure, or rational hope for the
‘ future, as this same. I say this, because I think so,
‘ and feel it. But I shall not sink under it the more
‘ for that mode of considering the question.—I have
‘ made up my mind.

‘ By the way, however, you must not believe all
‘ you hear on the subject ; and don’t attempt to defend
‘ me. If you succeeded in that, it would be a mortal,
‘ or an immortal, offence—who can bear refutation ? I
‘ have but a very short answer for those whom it con-
‘ cerns ; and all the activity of myself and some vigo-
‘ rous friends have not yet fixed on any tangible ground
‘ or personage, on which or with whom I can discuss
‘ matters, in a summary way, with a fair pretext ;—
‘ though I nearly had *nailed one* yesterday, but he
‘ evaded by—what was judged by others—a satisfac-
‘ tory explanation. I speak of *circulators*—against
‘ whom I have no enmity, though I must act according

‘ to the common code of usage, when I hit upon those
‘ of the serious order.

‘ Now for other matters—Poesy, for instance. Leigh
‘ Hunt’s poem is a devilish good one—quaint, here
‘ and there, but with the substratum of originality, and
‘ with poetry about it, that will stand the test. I do
‘ not say this because he has inscribed it to me, which
‘ I am sorry for, as I should otherwise have begged you
‘ to review it in the *Edinburgh**. It is really deserving
‘ of much praise, and a favourable critique in the
‘ *E. R.* would but do it justice, and set it up before
‘ the public eye where it ought to be.

‘ How are you? and where? I have not the most
‘ distant idea what I am going to do myself, or with
‘ myself—or where—or what. I had, a few weeks
‘ ago, some things to say that would have made you
‘ laugh; but they tell me now that I must not laugh,
‘ and so I have been very serious—and am.

‘ I have not been very well—with a *liver* complaint
‘ —but am much better within the last fortnight,
‘ though still under Iatrical advice. I have latterly
‘ seen a little of * * * *

‘ I must go and dress to dine. My little girl is in
‘ the country, and, they tell me, is a very fine child,
‘ and now nearly three months old. Lady Noel (my
‘ mother-in-law, or, rather, *at law*) is at present over-
‘ looking it. Her daughter (Miss Milbanke that was)
‘ is, I believe, in London with her father. A Mrs. C.
‘ (now a kind of housekeeper and spy of Lady N.‘)
‘ who, in her better days, was a washerwoman, is sup-

* My reply to this part of his letter was, I find, as follows:—‘ With
‘ respect to Hunt’s Poem, though it is, I own, full of beauties, and though
‘ I like himself sincerely, I really could not undertake to praise it *seriously*.
‘ There is so much of the *quizzible* in all he writes, that I never can put
‘ on the proper pathetic face in reading him.’

‘ posed to be—by the learned—very much the occult
‘ cause of our late domestic discrepancies.

‘ In all this business, I am the sorriest for Sir Ralph.
‘ He and I are equally punished, though *magis pares*
‘ *quam similes* in our affliction. Yet it is hard for both
‘ to suffer for the fault of one, and so it is—I shall be
‘ separated from my wife; he will retain his.

‘ Ever, &c.’

In my reply to this letter, written a few days after, there is a passage which (though containing an opinion it might have been more prudent, perhaps, to conceal) I feel myself called upon to extract, on account of the singularly generous avowal,—honourable alike to both the parties in this unhappy affair,—which it was the means of drawing from Lord Byron. The following are my words:—‘ I am much in the same
‘ state as yourself with respect to the subject of your
‘ letter, my mind being so full of things which I don’t
‘ know how to write about, that I too must defer the
‘ greater part of them till we meet in May, when I
‘ shall put you fairly on your trial for all crimes and
‘ misdemeanors. In the mean time, you will not be at
‘ a loss for judges, nor executioners either, if they
‘ could have their will. The world, in their generous
‘ ardour to take what they call the weaker side, soon
‘ contrive to make it most formidably the strongest.
‘ Most sincerely do I grieve at what has happened. It
‘ has upset all my wishes and theories as to the influ-
‘ ence of marriage on your life; for, instead of bringing
‘ you, as I expected, into something like a regular orbit,
‘ it has only cast you off again into infinite space, and
‘ left you, I fear, in a far worse state than it found you.
‘ As to defending you, the only person with whom I

‘ have yet attempted this task is myself; and, consider-
 ‘ ing the little I know upon the subject (or rather, per-
 ‘ haps, *owing* to this cause), I have hitherto done it
 ‘ with very tolerable success. After all, your *choice*
 ‘ was the misfortune. I never liked,—but I’m here
 ‘ wandering into the *απορρητα*, and so must change the
 ‘ subject for a far pleasanter one, your last new Poems,
 ‘ which, &c. &c.’

The return of post brought me the following answer, which, while it raises our admiration of the generous candour of the writer, but adds to the sadness and strangeness of the whole transaction.

LETTER 234.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *March 8th, 1816.*

‘ I rejoice in your promotion as Chairman and
 ‘ Charitable Steward, &c. &c. These be dignities which
 ‘ await only the virtuous. But then, recollect you are
 ‘ *six* and *thirty* (I speak this enviously—not of your
 ‘ age, but the “honour—love—obedience—troops of
 ‘ friends,” which accompany it), and I have eight years
 ‘ good to run before I arrive at such hoary perfection;
 ‘ by which time,—if I *am* at all*,—it will probably be
 ‘ in a state of grace or progressing merits.

‘ I must set you right in one point, however. The
 ‘ fault was *not*—no, nor even the misfortune—in my
 ‘ “choice” (unless in *choosing at all*)—for I do not
 ‘ believe—and I must say it, in the very dregs of all
 ‘ this bitter business—that there ever was a better, or
 ‘ even a brighter, a kinder, or a more amiable and

* This sad doubt,—‘ if I *am* at all,’—becomes no less singular than sad when we recollect that six and thirty was actually the age when he ceased to ‘be,’ and at a moment, too, when (as even the least friendly to him allow) he was in that state of ‘progressing merits’ which he here jestingly anticipates.

‘ agreeable being than Lady B. I never had, nor can
‘ have, any reproach to make her, while with me.
‘ Where there is blame, it belongs to myself, and, if I
‘ cannot redeem, I must bear it.

‘ Her nearest relatives are a * * * *—my circum-
‘ stances have been and are in a state of great confu-
‘ sion—my health has been a good deal disordered, and
‘ my mind ill at ease for a considerable period. Such
‘ are the causes (I do not name them as excuses) which
‘ have frequently driven me into excess, and disqualified
‘ my temper for comfort. Something also may be attri-
‘ buted to the strange and desultory habits which, be-
‘ coming my own master at an early age, and scrambling
‘ about, over and through the world, may have induced.
‘ I still, however, think that, if I had had a fair chance,
‘ by being placed in even a tolerable situation, I might
‘ have gone on fairly. But that seems hopeless,—and
‘ there is nothing more to be said. At present—
‘ except my health, which is better (it is odd, but agi-
‘ tation or contest of any kind gives a rebound to my
‘ spirits and sets me up for the time)—I have to battle
‘ with all kinds of unpleasantnesses, including private
‘ and pecuniary difficulties, &c. &c.

‘ I believe I may have said this before to you, but I
‘ risk repeating it. It is nothing to bear the *privations*
‘ of adversity, or, more properly, ill fortune; but my
‘ pride recoils from its *indignities*. However, I have
‘ no quarrel with that same pride, which will, I think,
‘ buckler me through everything. If my heart could
‘ have been broken, it would have been so years ago,
‘ and by events more afflicting than these.

‘ I agree with you (to turn from this topic to our
‘ shop) that I have written too much. The last things
‘ were, however, published very reluctantly by me, and

‘ for reasons I will explain when we meet. I know
‘ not why I have dwelt so much on the same scenes,
‘ except that I find them fading, or *confusing* (if such
‘ a word may be) in my memory, in the midst of pre-
‘ sent turbulence and pressure, and I felt anxious to
‘ stamp before the die was worn out. I now break it.
‘ With those countries, and events connected with
‘ them, all my really poetical feelings begin and end.
‘ Were I to try, I could make nothing of any other
‘ subject, and that I have apparently exhausted. “Wo
‘ to him,” says Voltaire, “who says all he could say on
‘ any subject.” There are some on which, perhaps, I
‘ could have said still more: but I leave them all, and
‘ too soon.

‘ Do you remember the lines I sent you early last
‘ year, which you still have? I don’t wish (like Mr.
‘ Fitzgerald, in the Morning Post) to claim the charac-
‘ ter of “Vates” in all its translations, but were they
‘ not a little prophetic? I mean those beginning,
‘ “There’s not a joy the world can,” &c. &c. on which
‘ I rather pique myself as being the truest, though the
‘ most melancholy, I ever wrote.

‘ What a scrawl have I sent you! You say nothing
‘ of yourself, except that you are a Lancasterian church-
‘ warden, and an encourager of mendicants. When are
‘ you out? and how is your family? My child is very
‘ well and flourishing, I hear; but I must see also. I
‘ feel no disposition to resign it to the contagion of its
‘ grandmother’s society, though I am unwilling to take
‘ it from the mother. It is weaned, however, and
‘ something about it must be decided. Ever, &c.’

Having already gone so far in laying open to my
readers some of the sentiments which I entertained,

respecting Lord Byron's marriage, at a time when, little foreseeing that I should ever become his biographer, I was, of course, uninfluenced by the peculiar bias supposed to belong to that task, it may still further, perhaps, be permitted me to extract from my reply to the foregoing letter some sentences of explanation which its contents seemed to me to require.

‘ I had certainly no right to say anything about the
‘ unluckiness of your choice, though I rejoice now that
‘ I did, as it has drawn from you a tribute which,
‘ however unaccountable and mysterious it renders the
‘ whole affair, is highly honourable to both parties.
‘ What I meant in hinting a doubt with respect to the
‘ object of your selection did not imply the least im-
‘ peachment of that perfect amiableness which the
‘ world, I find, by common consent, allows to her. I
‘ only feared that she might have been too perfect—
‘ too *precisely* excellent—too matter-of-fact a para-
‘ gon for you to coalesce with comfortably; and
‘ that a person, whose perfection hung in more easy
‘ folds about her, whose brightness was softened down
‘ by some of “ those fair defects which best conciliate
‘ love,” would, by appealing more dependently to your
‘ protection, have stood a much better chance with
‘ your good-nature. All these suppositions, however,
‘ I have been led into by my intense anxiety to acquit
‘ you of anything like a capricious abandonment of
‘ such a woman*; and, totally in the dark as I am with
‘ respect to all but the fact of your separation, you
‘ cannot conceive the solicitude, the fearful solicitude,
‘ with which I look forward to a history of the trans-

* It will be perceived from this that I was as yet unacquainted with the true circumstances of the transaction.

‘ action from your own lips when we meet,—a history
‘ in which I am sure of, at least, *one* virtue—manly
‘ candour.’

With respect to the causes that may be supposed to have led to this separation, it seems needless, with the characters of both parties before our eyes, to go in quest of any very remote or mysterious reasons to account for it. I have already, in some observations on the general character of men of genius, endeavoured to point out those peculiarities, both in disposition and habitudes, by which, in the far greater number of instances, they have been found unfitted for domestic happiness. Of these defects, (which are, as it were, the shadow that genius casts, and too generally, it is to be feared, in proportion to its stature,) Lord Byron could not, of course, fail to have inherited his share, in common with all the painfully-gifted class to which he belonged. How thoroughly, with respect to one attribute of this temperament which he possessed,—one, that ‘sicklies o’er’ the face of happiness itself,—he was understood by the person most interested in observing him, will appear from the following anecdote, as related by himself*.

‘ People have wondered at the melancholy which
‘ runs through my writings. Others have wondered
‘ at my personal gaiety. But I recollect once, after
‘ an hour in which I had been sincerely and particu-
‘ larly gay and rather brilliant, in company, my wife
‘ replying to me when I said (upon her remarking my
‘ high spirits), “ And yet, Bell, I have been called and
‘ mis-called melancholy—you must have seen how
‘ falsely, frequently ?”—“ No, Byron,” she answered,

* MS.—‘ Detached Thoughts.’

‘ “ it is not so : at heart you are the most melancholy
‘ of mankind ; and often when apparently gayest.” ’

To these faults and sources of faults, inherent in his own sensitive nature, he added also many of those which a long indulgence of self-will generates,—the least compatible, of all others (if not softened down, as they were in him, by good-nature), with that system of mutual concession and sacrifice by which the balance of domestic peace is maintained. When we look back, indeed, to the unbridled career, of which this marriage was meant to be the goal,—to the rapid and restless course in which his life had run along, like a burning train, through a series of wanderings, adventures, successes, and passions, the fever of all which was still upon him, when, with the same headlong recklessness, he rushed into this marriage,—it can but little surprise us that, in the space of one short year, he should not have been able to recover all at once from his bewilderment, or to settle down into that tame level of conduct which the close observers of his every action required. As well might it be expected that a steed like his own Mazeppa’s,

‘ Wild as the wild deer and untaught,
‘ With spur and bridle undefiled—
‘ ’Twas but a day he had been caught,’

should stand still, when reined, without chafing or champing the bit.

Even had the new condition of life into which he passed been one of prosperity and smoothness, some time, as well as tolerance, must still have been allowed for the subsiding of so excited a spirit into rest. But, on the contrary, his marriage (from the reputation, no doubt, of the lady, as an heiress) was, at once, a signal for all the arrears and claims of a long-accumulating

state of embarrassment to' explode upon him;—his door was almost daily beset by duns, and his house nine times during that year in possession of bailiffs*; while, in addition to these anxieties and—what he felt still more—indignities of poverty, he had also the pain of fancying, whether rightly or wrongly, that the eyes of enemies and spies were upon him, even under his own roof, and that his every hasty word and look were interpreted in the most perverting light.

As, from the state of their means, his lady and he saw but little society, his only relief from the thoughts which a life of such embarrassment brought with it was in those avocations which his duty, as a member of the Drury-lane Committee, imposed upon him. And here,—in this most unlucky connexion with the theatre,—one of the fatalities of his short year of trial, as husband, lay. From the reputation which he had previously acquired for gallantries, and the sort of reckless and boyish levity to which—often in very 'bitterness of soul'—he gave way, it was not difficult to bring suspicion upon some of those acquaintances which his frequent intercourse with the green-room induced him to form, or even (as, in one instance, was

* An anecdote connected with one of these occasions is thus related in the Journal just referred to.

'When the bailiff (for I have seen most kinds of life) came upon me in 1815 to seize my chattels (being a peer of parliament, my person was beyond him), being curious (as is my habit), I first asked him "what extents elsewhere he had for government?" upon which he showed me one upon *one house only* for *seventy thousand pounds!* Next I asked him if he had nothing for Sheridan? "Oh—Sheridan!" said he; "ay, I have this" (pulling out a pocket-book, &c.); "but, my lord, I have been in Sheridan's house a twelvemonth at a time—a civil gentleman—knows how to deal with us," &c. &c. &c. Our own business was then discussed, which was none of the easiest for me at that time. But the man was civil, and (what I valued more) communicative. I had met many of his brethren, years before, in affairs of my friends (commoners, that is), but this was the first (or second) on my own account.—A civil man; fee'd accordingly; probably he anticipated as much.'

the case) to connect with his name injuriously that of a person to whom he had scarcely ever addressed a single word.

Notwithstanding, however, this ill-starred concurrence of circumstances, which might have palliated any excesses either of temper or conduct into which they drove him, it was, after all, I am persuaded, to no such serious causes that the unfortunate alienation, which so soon ended in disunion, is to be traced. ‘In ‘all the marriages I have ever seen,’ says Steele, ‘most of which have been unhappy ones, the great ‘cause of evil has proceeded from slight occasions;’ and to this remark, I think, the marriage under our consideration would not be found, upon inquiry, to be an exception. Lord Byron himself, indeed, when at Cephalonia, a short time before his death, seems to have expressed, in a few words, the whole pith of the mystery. An English gentleman with whom he was conversing on the subject of Lady Byron, having ventured to enumerate to him the various causes he had heard alleged for the separation, the noble poet, who had seemed much amused with their absurdity and falsehood, said, after listening to them all,—‘The causes, my dear Sir, were too simple to be easily found out.’

In truth, the circumstances, so unexampled, that attended their separation,—the last words of the parting wife to the husband being those of the most playful affection, while the language of the deserted husband towards the wife was in a strain, as the world knows, of tenderest eulogy,—are in themselves a sufficient proof that, at the time of their parting, there could have been no very deep sense of injury on either side. It was not till afterwards that, in both bosoms, the

repulsive force came into operation,—when, to the party which had taken the first decisive step in the strife, it became naturally a point of pride to persevere in it with dignity, and this unbendingness provoked, as naturally, in the haughty spirit of the other, a strong feeling of resentment which overflowed, at last, in acrimony and scorn. If there be any truth, however, in the principle that they ‘never pardon who have done the wrong,’ Lord Byron, who was, to the last, disposed to reconciliation, proved so far, at least, his conscience to have been unhaunted by any very disturbing consciousness of aggression.

But though it would have been difficult, perhaps, for the victims of this strife, themselves, to have pointed out any single, or definite, cause for their disunion,—beyond that general incompatibility which is the canker of all such marriages,—the public, which seldom allows itself to be at a fault on these occasions, was, as usual, ready with an ample supply of reasons for the breach,—all tending to blacken the already darkly painted character of the poet, and representing him, in short, as a finished monster of cruelty and depravity. The reputation of the object of his choice for every possible virtue (a reputation which had been, I doubt not, one of his own chief incentives to the marriage, from the vanity, reprobate as he knew he was deemed, of being able to win such a paragon), was now turned against him by his assailants, not only in the way of contrast with his own character, but as if the excellences of the wife were proof positive of every enormity they chose to charge upon the husband.

Meanwhile, the unmoved silence of the lady herself (from motives, it is but fair to suppose, of generosity and delicacy), under the repeated demands made for a

specification of her charges against him, left to malice and imagination the fullest range for their combined industry. It was accordingly stated, and almost universally believed, that the noble lord's second proposal to Miss Milbanke had been but with a view to revenge himself for the slight inflicted by her refusal of the first, and that he himself had confessed so much to her on their way from church. At the time when, as the reader has seen from his own honey-moon letters, he was, with all the good-will in the world, imagining himself into happiness, and even boasting, in the pride of his fancy, that if marriage were to be upon *lease*, he would gladly renew his own for a term of ninety-nine years,—at this very time, according to these veracious chroniclers, he was employed in darkly following up the aforesaid scheme of revenge, and tormenting his lady by all sorts of unmanly cruelties,—such as firing off pistols, to frighten her as she lay in bed *, and other such freaks.

To the falsehoods concerning his green-room intimacies, and particularly with respect to one beautiful actress, with whom, in reality, he had hardly ever exchanged a single word, I have already adverted; and the extreme confidence with which this tale was circu-

* For this story, however, there was so far a foundation that the practice to which he had accustomed himself from boyhood, of having loaded pistols always near him at night, was considered so strange a propensity as to be included in that list of symptoms (sixteen, I believe, in number) which were submitted to medical opinion, in proof of his insanity. Another symptom was the emotion, almost to hysterics, which he had exhibited on seeing Kean act Sir Giles Overreach. But the most plausible of all the grounds, as he himself used to allow, on which these articles of impeachment against his sanity were drawn up, was an act of violence committed by him on a favourite old watch that had been his companion from boyhood, and had gone with him to Greece. In a fit of vexation and rage, brought on by some of those humiliating embarrassments to which he was now almost daily a prey, he furiously dashed this watch upon the hearth, and ground it to pieces among the ashes with the poker.

lated and believed affords no unfair specimen of the sort of evidence with which the public, in all such fits of moral wrath, is satisfied. It is, at the same time, very far from my intention to allege that, in the course of the noble poet's intercourse with the theatre, he was not sometimes led into a line of acquaintance and converse, unbefitting, if not dangerous to, the steadiness of married life. But the imputations against him on this head were (as far as affected his conjugal character) not the less unfounded,—as the sole case in which he afforded anything like *real* grounds for such an accusation did not take place till *after* the period of the separation.

Not content with such ordinary and tangible charges, the tongue of rumour was emboldened to proceed still further; and, presuming upon the mysterious silence maintained by one of the parties, ventured to throw out dark hints and vague insinuations, of which the fancy of every hearer was left to fill up the outline as he pleased. In consequence of all this exaggeration, such an outcry was now raised against Lord Byron as, in no case of private life, perhaps, was ever before witnessed; nor had the whole amount of fame which he had gathered, in the course of the last four years, much exceeded in proportion the reproach and obloquy that were now, within the space of a few weeks, showered upon him. In addition to the many who, no doubt, conscientiously believed and reprobated what they had but too much right, whether viewing him as poet or man of fashion, to consider credible excesses, there were also actively on the alert that large class of persons who seem to hold violence against the vices of others to be equivalent to virtue in themselves, together with all those natural haters or

success who, having long sickened under the splendour of the *poet*, were now able, in the guise of champions for innocence, to wreak their spite on the *man*. In every various form of paragraph, pamphlet, and caricature, both his character and person were held up to odium* ;—hardly a voice was raised, or at least listened to, in his behalf; and though a few faithful friends remained unshaken by his side, the utter hopelessness of stemming the torrent was felt as well by them as by himself, and, after an effort or two to gain a fair hearing, they submitted in silence. Among the few attempts made by himself towards confuting his calumniators was an appeal (such as the following short letter contains) to some of those persons with whom he had been in the habit of living familiarly.

LETTER 235.

TO MR. ROGERS.

‘ *March 25th, 1816.*

‘ You are one of the few persons with whom I have
‘ lived in what is called intimacy, and have heard me

* Of the abuse lavished upon him, the following extract from a Poem, published at this time, will give some idea.

‘ From native England, that endured too long
‘ The ceaseless burden of his impious song ;
‘ His mad career of crimes and follies run,
‘ And grey in vice, when life was scarce begun ;
‘ He goes, in foreign lands prepared to find
‘ A life more suited to his guilty mind ;
‘ Where other climes new pleasures may supply
‘ For that pall’d taste, and that unhallow’d eye ;—
‘ Wisely he seeks some yet untrodden shore,
‘ For those who know him less may prize him more.’

In a rhyming pamphlet, too, entitled ‘ A Poetical Epistle from Delia, addressed to Lord Byron,’ the writer thus charitably expresses herself:—

‘ Hopeless of peace below, and, shuddering thought !
‘ Far from that Heav’n, denied, if never sought,
‘ Thy light a beacon—a reproach thy name—
‘ Thy memory “ damn’d to everlasting fame,”
‘ Shunn’d by the wise, admired by fools alone—
‘ The good shall mourn thee—and the Muse disown.’

‘ at times conversing on the untoward topic of my
‘ recent family disquietudes. Will you have the good-
‘ ness to say to me at once, whether you ever heard me
‘ speak of her with disrespect, with unkindness, or de-
‘ fending myself at *her* expense by any serious impu-
‘ tation of any description against *her*? Did you never
‘ hear me say “that when there was a right or a wrong,
‘ she had the *right*?”—The reason I put these ques-
‘ tions to you or others of my friends is, because I am
‘ said, by her and hers, to have resorted to such means
‘ of exculpation. Ever very truly yours,

‘ B.’

In those memoirs (or, more properly, Memoranda) of the noble poet, which it was thought expedient, for various reasons, to sacrifice, he gave a detailed account of all the circumstances connected with his marriage, from the first proposal to the lady till his own departure, after the breach, from England. In truth, though the title of ‘Memoirs,’ which he himself sometimes gave to that manuscript, conveys the idea of a complete and regular piece of biography, it was to this particular portion of his life that the work was principally devoted; while the anecdotes, having reference to other parts of his career, not only occupied a very disproportionate space in its pages, but were most of them such as are found repeated in the various Journals and other MSS. he left behind. The chief charm, indeed, of that narrative was the melancholy playfulness—melancholy, from the wounded feeling so visible through its pleasantry—with which events unimportant and persons uninteresting, in almost every respect but their connexion with such a man’s destiny, were detailed and described in it. Frank, as usual,

throughout, in his avowal of his own errors, and generously just towards her who was his fellow-sufferer in the strife, the impression his recital left on the minds of all who perused it was, to say the least, favourable to him ;—though, upon the whole, leading to a persuasion, which I have already intimated to be my own, that, neither in kind nor degree, did the causes of disunion between the parties much differ from those that loosen the links of most such marriages.

With respect to the details themselves, though all important in his own eyes at the time, as being connected with the subject that superseded most others in his thoughts, the interest they would possess for others, now that their first zest as a subject of scandal is gone by, and the greater number of the persons to whom they relate forgotten, would be too slight to justify me in entering upon them more particularly, or running the risk of any offence that might be inflicted by their disclosure. As far as the character of the illustrious subject of these pages is concerned, I feel that Time and Justice are doing far more for it than could be effected by any such gossiping details. During the lifetime of a man of genius, the world is but too much inclined to judge of him rather by what he wants than by what he possesses, and even where conscious, as in the present case, that his defects are among the sources of his greatness, to require of him unreasonably the one without the other. If Pope had not been splenetic and irritable, we should have wanted his Satires ; and an impetuous temperament, and passions untamed, were indispensable to the conformation of a poet like Byron. It is by posterity only that full justice is rendered to those who have paid such hard penalties to reach it. The dross that had once hung about the ore

drops away, and the infirmities, and even miseries, of genius are forgotten in its greatness. Who now asks whether Dante was right or wrong in his matrimonial differences? or by how many of those whose fancies dwell fondly on his Beatrice is even the name of his Gemma Donati remembered?

Already, short as has been the interval since Lord Byron's death, the charitable influence of time in softening, if not rescinding, the harsh judgments of the world against genius is visible. The utter unreasonableness of trying such a character by ordinary standards, or of expecting to find the materials of order and happiness in a bosom constantly heaving forth from its depths such 'lava floods,' is—now that his spirit has passed from among us—felt and acknowledged. In reviewing the circumstances of his marriage, a more even scale of justice is held; and while every tribute of sympathy and commiseration is accorded to her, who, unluckily for her own peace, became involved in such a destiny,—who, with virtues and attainments that would have made the home of a more ordinary man happy, undertook, in evil hour, to 'turn and wind a fiery Pegasus,' and but failed where it may be doubted whether even the fittest for such a task would have succeeded,—full allowance is, at the same time, made for the great martyr of genius himself, whom so many other causes, beside that restless fire within him, concurred to unsettle in mind and (as he himself feelingly expresses it) 'disqualify for comfort;'—whose doom it was to be either thus or less great, and whom to have tamed might have been to extinguish; there never, perhaps, having existed an individual to whom, whether as author or man, the following line was more applicable,—

‘ Si non errasset, fecerat ille minus*.’

While these events were going on,—events, of which his memory and heart bore painfully the traces through the remainder of his short life,—some occurrences took place, connected with his literary history, to which it is a relief to divert the attention of the reader from the distressing subject that has now so long detained us.

The letter that follows was in answer to one received from Mr. Murray, in which that gentleman had enclosed him a draft for a thousand guineas for the copyright of his two Poems, the Siege of Corinth and Parisina.

LETTER 236.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ January 3d, 1816.

‘ Your offer is *liberal* in the extreme (you see I
‘ use the word *to* you and *of* you, though I would not
‘ consent to your using it of yourself to Mr. * * * *),
‘ and much more than the two poems can possibly be
‘ worth; but I cannot accept it, nor will not. You are
‘ most welcome to them as additions to the collected
‘ volumes, without any demand or expectation on my
‘ part whatever. But I cannot consent to their sepa-
‘ rate publication. I do not like to risk any fame
‘ (whether merited or not), which I have been favoured
‘ with, upon compositions which I do not feel to be at
‘ all equal to my own notions of what they should be
‘ (and as I flatter myself some *have been*, here and
‘ there), though they may do very well as things without
‘ pretension, to add to the publication with the lighter
‘ pieces.

‘ I am very glad that the handwriting was a favour-
‘ able omen of the *morale* of the piece: but you must
‘ not trust to that, for my copyist would write out any-

* Had he not erred, he had far less achieved.

‘ thing I desired in all the ignorance of innocence—I
‘ hope, however, in this instance, with no great peril
‘ to either.

‘ P.S. I have enclosed your draft *torn*, for fear of
‘ accidents by the way—I wish you would not throw
‘ temptation in mine. It is not from a disdain of the
‘ universal idol, nor from a present superfluity of his
‘ treasures, I can assure you, that I refuse to worship
‘ him; but what is right is right, and must not yield
‘ to circumstances.’

Notwithstanding the ruinous state of his pecuniary affairs, the resolution which the poet had formed not to avail himself of the profits of his works still continued to be held sacred by him; and the sum thus offered for the copyright of the *Siege of Corinth* and *Parisina* was, as we see, refused and left untouched in the publisher's hands. It happened that, at this time, a well-known and eminent writer on political science had been, by some misfortune, reduced to pecuniary embarrassment; and the circumstance having become known to Mr. Rogers and Sir James Mackintosh, it occurred to them that a part of the sum thus unappropriated by Lord Byron could not be better bestowed than in relieving the necessities of this gentleman. The suggestion was no sooner conveyed to the noble poet than he proceeded to act upon it; and the following letter to Mr. Rogers refers to his intentions:—

LETTER 237.

TO MR. ROGERS.

‘ *February 20th, 1816.*

‘ I wrote to you hastily this morning by Murray,
‘ to say that I was glad to do as Mackintosh and you
‘ suggested about Mr. * *. It occurs to me now, that

‘ as I have never seen Mr. * * but once, and conse-
‘ quently have no claim to his acquaintance, that you
‘ or Sir J. had better arrange it with him in such a
‘ manner as may be least offensive to his feelings, and
‘ so as not to have the appearance of officiousness nor
‘ obtrusion on my part. I hope you will be able to do
‘ this, as I should be very sorry to do anything by him
‘ that may be deemed indelicate. The sum Murray
‘ offered and offers was and is one thousand and fifty
‘ pounds :—this I refused before, because I thought it
‘ more than the two things were worth to Murray, and
‘ from other objections, which are of no consequence.
‘ I have, however, closed with M., in consequence of
‘ Sir J.’s and your suggestion, and propose the sum of
‘ six hundred pounds to be transferred to Mr. * * in
‘ such a manner as may seem best to your friend,—
‘ the remainder I think of for other purposes.

‘ As Murray has offered the money down for the
‘ copyrights, it may be done directly. I am ready to
‘ sign and seal immediately, and perhaps it had better
‘ not be delayed. I shall feel very glad if it can be
‘ of any use to * *; only don’t let him be plagued, nor
‘ think himself obliged and all that, which makes people
‘ hate one another, &c. Yours, very truly,

‘ B.’

In his mention here of other ‘ purposes,’ he refers to an intention which he had of dividing the residue of the sum between two other gentlemen of literary celebrity, equally in want of such aid, Mr. Maturin and Mr. * *. The whole design, however, though entered into with the utmost sincerity on the part of the noble poet, ultimately failed. Mr. Murray, who was well acquainted with the straits to which Lord

Byron himself had been reduced, and foresaw that a time might come when even money thus gained would be welcome to him, on learning the uses to which the sum was to be applied, demurred in advancing it,—alleging that, though bound not only by his word but his will to pay the amount to Lord Byron, he did not conceive himself called upon to part with it to others. How earnestly the noble poet himself, though with executions, at the time, impending over his head, endeavoured to urge the point, will appear from the following letter:—

LETTER 238.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *February 22d, 1816.*

‘ When the sum offered by you, and even *pressed*
 ‘ by you, was declined, it was with reference to a sepa-
 ‘ rate publication, as you know and I know. That it
 ‘ was large, I admitted and admit; and *that* made part
 ‘ of my consideration in refusing it, till I knew better
 ‘ what you were likely to make of it. With regard to
 ‘ what is past, or is to pass, about Mr. M. * *, the case
 ‘ is in no respect different from the transfer of former
 ‘ copyrights to Mr. Dallas. Had I taken you at your
 ‘ word, that is, taken your money, I might have used
 ‘ it as I pleased; and it could be in no respect different
 ‘ to you whether I paid it to a w—, or a hospital, or
 ‘ assisted a man of talent in distress. The truth of the
 ‘ matter seems this: you offered more than the poems
 ‘ are worth. I *said* so, and I *think* so; but you know,
 ‘ or at least ought to know, your own business best;
 ‘ and when you recollect what passed between you and
 ‘ me upon pecuniary subjects before this occurred, you
 ‘ will acquit me of any wish to take advantage of your
 ‘ imprudence.

‘ The things in question shall not be published at
all, and there is an end of the matter.

‘ Yours, &c.’

The letter that follows will give some idea of those embarrassments in his own affairs, under the pressure of which he could be thus considerate of the wants of others.

LETTER 239.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ March 6th, 1816.

‘ I sent to you to-day for this reason—the books
‘ you purchased are again seized, and, as matters
‘ stand, had much better be sold at once by public
‘ auction*. I wish to see you to return your bill for
‘ them, which, thank God, is neither due nor paid.
‘ *That* part, as far as *you* are concerned, being settled
‘ (which it can be, and shall be, when I see you to-
‘ morrow), I have no further delicacy about the mat-
‘ ter. This is about the tenth execution in as many
‘ months; so I am pretty well hardened; but it is fit
‘ I should pay the forfeit of my forefathers’ extrava-
‘ gance and my own; and whatever my faults may be,
‘ I suppose they will be pretty well expiated in time—
‘ or eternity. ‘ Ever, &c.

* The sale of these books took place the following month, and they were described in the catalogue as the property of ‘a Nobleman about to leave England on a tour.’

From a note to Mr. Murray, it would appear that he had been first announced as going to the Morea.

‘ I hope that the catalogue of the books, &c., has not been published without my seeing it. I must reserve several, and many ought not to be printed. The advertisement is a very bad one. I am not going to the *Morea*; and if I was, you might as well advertise a man in Russia as going to *Yorshire*.—Ever, &c.’

Together with the books was sold an article of furniture, which is now in the possession of Mr. Murray, namely, ‘a large screen covered with portraits of actors, pugilists, representations of boxing-matches,’ &c.

‘ P. S. I need hardly say that I knew nothing till
 ‘ this *day* of the new *seizure*. I had released them
 ‘ from former ones, and thought, when you took them,
 ‘ that they were yours.

‘ You shall have your bill again to-morrow.’

During the month of January and part of February, his poems of the Siege of Corinth and Parisina were in the hands of the printers, and about the end of the latter month made their appearance. The following letters are the only ones I find connected with their publication.

LETTER 240.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *February 3rd, 1816.*

‘ I sent for “Marmion,” which I return, because it
 ‘ occurred to me, there might be a resemblance between
 ‘ part of “Parisina” and a similar scene in Canto 2nd
 ‘ of “Marmion.” I fear there is, though I never
 ‘ thought of it before, and could hardly wish to imitate
 ‘ that which is inimitable. I wish you would ask Mr.
 ‘ Gifford whether I ought to say anything upon it;—
 ‘ I had completed the story on the passage from Gib-
 ‘ bon, which indeed leads to a like scene naturally,
 ‘ without a thought of the kind: but it comes upon
 ‘ me not very comfortably.

‘ There are a few words and phrases I want to alter
 ‘ in the MS., and should like to do it before you
 ‘ print, and will return it in an hour.

‘ Yours ever.’

LETTER 241.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *February 20th, 1816.*

‘ To return to *our* business—your epistles are vastly
 ‘ agreeable. With regard to the observations on

‘ carelessness, &c., I think, with all humility, that the
‘ gentle reader has considered a rather uncommon, and
‘ designedly irregular, versification for haste and neg-
‘ ligence. The measure is not that of any of the other
‘ poems, which (I believe) were allowed to be tolerably
‘ correct, according to Byshe and the fingers—or ears
‘ —by which bards write, and readers reckon. Great
‘ part of the “Siege” is in (I think) what the learned
‘ call Anapests (though I am not sure, being heinously
‘ forgetful of my metres and my “Gradus”), and many
‘ of the lines intentionally longer or shorter than its
‘ rhyming companion; and rhyme also occurring at
‘ greater or less intervals of caprice or convenience.

‘ I mean not to say that this is right or good, but
‘ merely that I could have been smoother, had it ap-
‘ peared to me of advantage; and that I was not other-
‘ wise without being aware of the deviation, though I
‘ now feel sorry for it, as I would undoubtedly rather
‘ please than not. My wish has been to try at some-
‘ thing different from my former efforts; as I endea-
‘ voured to make them differ from each other. The
‘ versification of the “Corsair” is not that of “Lara;”
‘ nor the “Giaour” that of the “Bride:” Childe
‘ Harold is again varied from these; and I strove to
‘ vary the last somewhat from *all* of the others.

‘ Excuse all this d—d nonsense and egotism. The
‘ fact is, that I am rather trying to think on the sub-
‘ ject of this note, than really thinking on it.—I did
‘ not know you had called: you are always admitted
‘ and welcome when you choose.

‘ Yours, &c. &c.

‘ P.S. You need not be in any apprehension or grief
‘ on my account: were I to be beaten down by the
‘ world and its inheritors, I should have succumbed to

‘ many things, years ago. You must not mistake my
‘ ~~not~~ bullying for dejection; nor ~~imagine~~ that be-
‘ cause I feel, I am to faint:—but enough for the pre-
‘ sent.

‘ I am sorry for Sotheby’s row. What the devil is it
‘ about? I thought it all settled; and if I can do
‘ anything about him or Ivan still, I am ready and
‘ willing. I do not think it proper for me just now to
‘ be much behind the scenes, but I will see the com-
‘ mittee and move upon it, if Sotheby likes.

‘ If you see Mr. Sotheby, will you tell him that I
‘ wrote to Mr. Coleridge, on getting Mr. Sotheby’s
‘ note, and have, I hope, done what Mr. S. wished on
‘ that subject?’

It was about the middle of April that his two celebrated copies of verses, ‘Fare thee well,’ and ‘A Sketch,’ made their appearance in the newspapers:—and while the latter poem was generally and, it must be owned, justly condemned, as a sort of literary assault on an obscure female, whose situation ought to have placed her as much *beneath* his satire as the undignified mode of his attack certainly raised her *above* it, with regard to the other poem, opinions were a good deal more divided. To many it appeared a strain of true conjugal tenderness, a kind of appeal, which no woman with a heart could resist; while by others, on the contrary, it was considered to be a mere showy effusion of sentiment, as difficult for real feeling to have produced as it was easy for fancy and art, and altogether unworthy of the deep interests involved in the subject. To this latter opinion, I confess my own to have, at first, strongly inclined; and suspicious as I could not help regarding the sentiment that could, at

such a moment, ~~indulge~~ in such verses, the taste that prompted or sanctioned their publication appeared to me even still more questionable. On reading, however, his own account of all the circumstances in the Memoranda, I found that on both points I had, in common with a large portion of the public, done him injustice. He there described, and in a manner whose sincerity there was no doubting, the swell of tender recollections under the influence of which, as he sat one night musing in his study, these stanzas were produced,—the tears, as he said, falling fast over the paper as he wrote them. Neither, from that account, did it appear to have been from any wish or intention of his own, but through the injudicious zeal of a friend whom he had suffered to take a copy, that the verses met the public eye.

The appearance of these Poems gave additional violence to the angry and inquisitorial feeling now abroad against him; and the title under which both pieces were immediately announced by various publishers, as ‘Poems by Lord Byron on his domestic circumstances,’ carried with it a sufficient exposure of the utter unfitness of such themes for rhyme. It is, indeed, only in those emotions and passions, of which imagination forms a predominant ingredient,—such as love, in its first dreams, before reality has come to embody or dispel them, or sorrow, in its wane, when beginning to pass away from the heart into the fancy,—that poetry ought ever to be employed as an interpreter of feeling. For the expression of all those immediate affections and disquietudes that have their root in the actual realities of life, the art of the poet, from the very circumstance of its being an art, as well as from the coloured form in which it is accustomed to

transmit impressions, cannot be otherwise than a medium as false as it is feeble.

To so very low an ebb had the industry of his assailants now succeeded in reducing his private character, that it required no small degree of courage, even among that class who are supposed to be the most tolerant of domestic irregularities, to invite him into their society. One distinguished lady of fashion, however, ventured so far as, on the eve of his departure from England, to make a party for him expressly; and nothing short, perhaps, of that high station in society which a life as blameless as it is brilliant has secured to her, could have placed beyond all reach of misrepresentation, at that moment, such a compliment to one marked with the world's censure so deeply. At this assembly of Lady J * *'s he made his last appearance, publicly, in England, and the amusing account given of some of the company in his Memoranda,—of the various and characteristic ways in which the temperature of their manner towards him was affected by the cloud under which he now appeared,—was one of the passages of that Memoir it would have been most desirable, perhaps, to have preserved; though, from being a gallery of sketches, all personal and many satirical, but a small portion of it, if any, could have been presented to the public till a time when the originals had long left the scene, and any interest they might once have excited was gone with themselves. Besides the noble hostess herself, whose kindness to him, on this occasion, he never forgot, there was also one other person (then Miss M * *, now Lady K * *) whose frank and fearless cordiality to him on that evening he most gratefully commemorated,—adding, in acknowledgment of a still more generous service, 'She

‘ is a high-minded woman, and showed me more friend-
‘ ship than I deserved from her. I heard also of her
‘ having defended me in a large company, which *at*
‘ *that time* required more courage and firmness than
‘ most women possess.’

As we are now approaching so near the close of his London life, I shall here throw together the few remaining recollections of that period with which the gleanings of his Memorandum-book, so often referred to, furnish me.

‘ I liked the Dandies ; they were always very civil
‘ to *me*, though in general they disliked literary people,
‘ and persecuted and mystified Madame de Staël,
‘ Lewis, * * * *, and the like, damnably. They per-
‘ suaded Madame de Staël that A * * had a hundred
‘ thousand a year, &c. &c., till she praised him to his
‘ *face* for his *beauty* ! and made a set at him for * *,
‘ and a hundred fooleries besides. The truth is, that,
‘ though I gave up the business early, I had a tinge of
‘ dandyism* in my minority, and probably retained
‘ enough of it to conciliate the great ones at five-and-
‘ twenty. I had gamed, and drank, and taken my
‘ degrees in most dissipations, and having no pedantry,
‘ and not being overbearing, we ran quietly together.
‘ I knew them all more or less, and they made me a
‘ member of Watier’s (a superb club at that time),
‘ being, I take it, the only literary man (except *two*
‘ *others*, both men of the world, Moore and Spenser)

* Petrarch was, it appears, also in his youth, a Dandy. ‘ Recollect,’ he says, in a letter to his brother, ‘ the time, when we wore white habits, ‘ on which the least spot, or a plait ill-placed, would have been a subject ‘ of grief; when our shoes were so tight we suffered martyrdom, &c.’

‘ in it. Our masquerade* was a grand one; so was
‘ the dandy-ball too, at the Argyle, but *that* (the latter)
‘ was given by the four chiefs, B., M., A., and P., if I
‘ err not.

‘ I was a member of the Alfred, too, being elected
‘ while in Greece. It was pleasant; a little too sober
‘ and literary, and bored with * * and Sir Francis
‘ D’Ivernois; but one met Peel, and Ward, and Va-
‘ lencia, and many other pleasant or known people;
‘ and it was, upon the whole, a decent resource in a
‘ rainy day, in a dearth of parties, or parliament, or in
‘ an empty season.

‘ I belonged, or belong, to the following clubs or
‘ societies:—to the Alfred; to the Cocoa Tree; to
‘ Watier’s; to the Union; to Racket’s (at Brighton);
‘ to the Pugilistic; to the Owls, or “Fly-by-night;”
‘ to the *Cambridge Whig Club*; to the Harrow Club,
‘ Cambridge; and to one or two private clubs; to the
‘ Hampden (political) Club; and to the Italian Carbo-
‘ nari, &c. &c. &c. “though last, *not least*.” I got into
‘ all these, and never stood for any other—at least to
‘ my own knowledge. I declined being proposed to
‘ several others, though pressed to stand candidate.’

‘ When I met H** L**, the jailor, at Lord Hol-
‘ land’s, before he sailed for St. Helena, the discourse
‘ turned upon the battle of Waterloo. I asked him
‘ whether the dispositions of Napoleon were those of a
‘ great general? He answered, disparagingly, “that
‘ they were very *simple*.” I had always thought that a
‘ degree of simplicity was an ingredient of greatness.’

* To this masquerade he went in the habit of a Caloyer, or Eastern monk,—a dress particularly well calculated to set off the beauty of his fine countenance, which was accordingly, that night, the subject of general admiration.

‘ I was much struck with the simplicity of Grattan’s manners in private life: they were odd, but they were natural. Curran used to take him off, bowing to the very ground, and “ thanking God that he had no peculiarities of gesture or appearance,” in a way irresistibly ludicrous; and * * used to call him a “ Sentimental harlequin.” ’

‘ Curran! Curran’s the man who struck me most*. Such imagination! there never was anything like it that ever I saw or heard of. His *published* life—his published speeches, give you *no* idea of the man—none at all. He was a *machine* of imagination, as some one said that Piron was an epigrammatic machine.

‘ I did not see a great deal of Curran—only in 1813; but I met him at home (for he used to call on me), and in society, at Mackintosh’s, Holland House, &c. &c. and he was wonderful even to me, who had seen many remarkable men of the time.’

‘ * * * (commonly called *long* * * *, a very clever man, but odd) complained of our friend Scrope B. Davies, in riding, that he had a *stitch* in his side. “ I don’t wonder at it,” said Scrope, “ for you ride

* In his Memoranda there were equally enthusiastic praises of Curran. ‘ The riches,’ said he, ‘ of his Irish imagination were exhaustless. I have heard that man speak more poetry than I have ever seen written,—though I saw him seldom and but occasionally. I saw him presented to Madame de Staël at Mackintosh’s;—it was the grand confluence between the Rhone and the Saone, and they were both so d—d ugly, that I could not help wondering how the best intellects of France and Ireland could have taken up respectively such residences.’

In another part, however, he was somewhat more fair to Madame de Staël’s personal appearance:—‘ Her figure was not bad; her legs tolerable; her arms good. Altogether, I can conceive her having been a desirable woman, allowing a little imagination for her soul, and so forth. She would have made a great man.’

‘ *like a tailor.*” Whoever had seen * * * on horseback,
‘ with his very tall figure on a small nag, would not
‘ deny the justice of the repartee.’

‘ When B * * was obliged (by that affair of poor
‘ M * *, who thence acquired the name of “ Dick the
‘ Dandy-killer ”—it was about money, and debt, and
‘ all that) to retire to France, he knew no French, and
‘ having obtained a grammar for the purpose of study,
‘ our friend Scrope Davies was asked what progress
‘ Brummell had made in French; he responded, “ that
‘ Brummell had been stopped, like Buonaparte in
‘ Russia, by the *Elements*.”

‘ I have put this pun into Beppo, which is “ a fair
‘ exchange and no robbery,” for Scrope made his for-
‘ tune at several dinners (as he owned himself) by
‘ repeating occasionally, as his own, some of the
‘ buffooneries with which I had encountered him in
‘ the morning.’

‘ * * * is a good man, rhymes well (if not wisely),
‘ but is a bore. He seizes you by the button. One
‘ night of a rout, at Mrs. Hope’s, he had fastened upon
‘ me, notwithstanding my symptoms of manifest dis-
‘ tress (for I was in love, and had just nicked a minute
‘ when neither mothers, nor husbands, nor rivals, nor
‘ gossips, were near my then idol, who was beautiful
‘ as the statues of the gallery where we stood at the
‘ time)—* * *, I say, had seized upon me by the button
‘ and the heart-strings, and spared neither. W. Spencer,
‘ who likes fun, and don’t dislike mischief, saw my
‘ case, and coming up to us both, took me by the hand,
‘ and pathetically bade me farewell; “ for,” said he,
‘ “ I see it is all over with you.” * * * then went
‘ away. *Sic me servavit Apollo.*’

‘ I remember seeing Blucher in the London assem-
 ‘ blies, and never saw anything of his age less vene-
 ‘ rable. With the voice and manners of a recruiting
 ‘ serjeant, he pretended to the honours of a hero,—
 ‘ just as if a stone could be worshipped because a man
 ‘ had stumbled over it.’

We now approach the close of this eventful period of his history. In a note to Mr. Rogers, written a short time before his departure for Ostend*, he says : — ‘ My sister is now with me, and leaves town to-
 ‘ morrow ; we shall not meet again for some time, at
 ‘ all events—if ever ; and, under these circumstances,
 ‘ I trust to stand excused to you and Mr. Sheridan for
 ‘ being unable to wait upon him this evening.’

This was his last interview with his sister,—almost the only person from whom he now parted with regret ; it being, as he said, doubtful *which* had given him most pain, the enemies who attacked or the friends who condoled with him. Those beautiful and most tender verses, ‘ Though the day of my destiny’s over,’ were now his parting tribute to her† who, through all this bitter trial, had been his sole consolation ; and, though known to most readers, so expressive are they of his wounded feelings at this crisis, that there are few, I think, who will object to seeing some stanzas of them here.

‘ Though the rock of my last hope is shiver’d,
 ‘ And its fragments are sunk in the wave,
 ‘ Though I feel that my soul is deliver’d
 ‘ To pain—it shall not be its slave.

* Dated April 16.

† It will be seen, from a subsequent letter, that the first stanza of that most cordial of Farewells, ‘ My boat is on the shore,’ was also written at this time.

- ‘ There is many a pang to pursue me :
 ‘ They may crush, but they shall not contemn—
 ‘ They may torture, but shall not subdue me—
 ‘ ‘Tis of *thee* that I think—not of them.

 ‘ Though human, thou didst not deceive me,
 ‘ Though woman, thou didst not forsake,
 ‘ Though lov’d, thou forborest to grieve me,
 ‘ Though slander’d, thou never couldst shake.
 ‘ Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,
 ‘ Though parted, it was not to fly,
 ‘ Though watchful, ’twas not to defame me,
 ‘ Nor mute, that the world might belie.

 ‘ From the wreck of the past, which hath perish’d,
 ‘ Thus much I at least may recall,
 ‘ It hath taught me that what I most cherish’d
 ‘ Deserved to be dearest of all :
 ‘ In the desert a fountain is springing,
 ‘ In the wide waste there still is a tree,
 ‘ And a bird in the solitude singing,
 ‘ Which speaks to my spirit of *thee*.’

On a scrap of paper, in his handwriting, dated April 14th, 1816, I find the following list of his attendants, with an annexed outline of his projected tour :—
 ‘ *Servants*, ——— Berger, a Swiss, William Fletcher,
 ‘ and Robert Rushton.—John William Polidori, M.D.
 ‘ —Switzerland, Flanders, Italy, and (perhaps) France.’
 The two English servants, it will be observed, were the same ‘yeoman’ and ‘page’ who had set out with him on his youthful travels in 1809; and now,—for the second and last time taking leave of his country,—on the 25th of April he sailed for Ostend.

The circumstances under which Lord Byron now took leave of England were such as, in the case of any ordinary person, could not be considered otherwise than disastrous and humiliating. He had, in the

course of one short year, gone through every variety of domestic misery ;—had seen his hearth eight or nine times profaned by the visitations of the law, and been only saved from a prison by the privileges of his rank. He had alienated, as far as they had ever been his, the affections of his wife ; and now, rejected by her, and condemned by the world, was betaking himself to an exile which had not even the dignity of appearing voluntary, as the excommunicating voice of society seemed to leave him no other resource. Had he been of that class of unfeeling and self-satisfied natures from whose hard surface the reproaches of others fall pointless, he might have found in insensibility a sure refuge against reproach ; but, on the contrary, the same sensitiveness that kept him so awake to the applauses of mankind rendered him, in a still more intense degree, alive to their censure. Even the strange, perverse pleasure which he felt in painting himself unamiably to the world did not prevent him from being both startled and pained when the world took him at his word ; and, like a child in a mask before a looking-glass, the dark semblance which he had, half in sport, put on, when reflected back upon him from the mirror of public opinion, shocked even himself.

Thus surrounded by vexations, and thus deeply feeling them, it is not too much to say, that any other spirit but his own would have sunk under the struggle, and lost, perhaps irrecoverably, that level of self-esteem which alone affords a stand against the shocks of fortune. But in him,—furnished as was his mind with reserves of strength, waiting to be called out,—the very intensity of the pressure brought relief by the proportionate reaction which it produced. Had his transgressions and frailties been visited with no more

than their due portion of punishment, there can be little doubt that a very different result would have ensued. Not only would such an excitement have been insufficient to waken up the new energies still dormant in him, but that consciousness of his own errors, which was for ever lively present in his mind, would, under such circumstances, have been left, undisturbed by any unjust provocation, to work its usual softening and, perhaps, humbling influences on his spirit. But,—luckily, as it proved, for the further triumphs of his genius,—no such moderation was exercised. The storm of invective raised around him, so utterly out of proportion with his offences, and the base calumnies that were everywhere heaped upon his name, left to his wounded pride no other resource than in the same summoning up of strength, the same instinct of resistance to injustice, which had first forced out the energies of his youthful genius, and was now destined to give a still bolder and loftier range to its powers.

It was, indeed, not without truth, said of him by Goethe, that he was inspired by the Genius of Pain,—for, from the first to the last of his agitated career, every fresh recruitment of his faculties was imbibed from that bitter source. His chief incentive, when a boy, to distinction was, as we have seen, that mark of deformity on his person, by an acute sense of which he was first stung into the ambition of being great*. As, with an evident reference to his own fate, he himself describes the feeling,—

* In one of his letters to Mr. Hunt, he declares it to be his own opinion that ‘an addiction to poetry is very generally the result of “an uneasy mind in an uneasy body;” disease or deformity,’ he adds, ‘have been the attendants of many of our best. Collins mad—Chatterton, I think, mad—Cowper mad—Pope crooked—Milton blind,” &c. &c.

‘ Deformity is daring.

- ‘ It is its essence to o’ertake mankind
- ‘ By heart and soul, and make itself the equal,—
- ‘ Ay, the superior of the rest. There is
- ‘ A spur in its halt movements, to become
- ‘ All that the others cannot, in such things
- ‘ As still are free to both, to compensate
- ‘ For stepdame Nature’s avarice at first*.’

Then came the disappointment of his youthful passion,—the lassitude and remorse of premature excess,—the lone friendlessness of his entrance into life, and the ruthless assault upon his first literary efforts,—all links in that chain of trials, errors, and sufferings, by which his great mind was gradually and painfully drawn out;—all bearing their respective shares in accomplishing that destiny which seems to have decreed that the triumphal march of his genius should be over the waste and ruins of his heart. He appeared, indeed, himself to have had an instinctive consciousness that it was out of such ordeals his strength and glory were to arise, as his whole life was passed in courting agitation and difficulties; and whenever the scenes around him were too tame to furnish such excitement, he flew to fancy or memory for ‘thorns’ whereon to ‘lean his breast.’

But the greatest of his trials, as well as triumphs, was yet to come. The last stage of this painful, though glorious, course, in which fresh power was, at every step, wrung from out his soul, was that at which we are now arrived, his marriage and its results,—without which, dear as was the price paid by him in peace and character, his career would have been incomplete, and the world still left in ignorance of the full compass of his genius. It is indeed worthy of

* The Deformed Transformed.

remark, that it was not till his domestic circumstances began to darken around him that his fancy, which had long been idle, again rose upon the wing,—both the Siege of Corinth and Parisina having been produced but a short time before the separation. How conscious he was, too, that the turmoil which followed was the true element of his restless spirit, may be collected from several passages of his letters at that period, in one of which he even mentions that his health had become all the better for the conflict:—
‘It is odd,’ he says, ‘but agitation or contest of any kind gives a rebound to my spirits, and sets me up for the time.’

This buoyancy it was,—this irrepressible spring of mind,—that now enabled him to bear up not only against the assaults of others, but, what was still more difficult, against his own thoughts and feelings. The muster of all his mental resources to which, in self-defence, he had been driven, but opened to him the yet undreamed extent and capacity of his powers, and inspired him with a proud confidence that he should yet shine down these calumnious mists, convert censure to wonder, and compel even those who could not approve to admire.

The route which he now took, through Flanders and by the Rhine, is best traced in his own matchless verses, which leave a portion of their glory on all that they touch, and lend to scenes, already clothed with immortality by nature and by history, the no less durable associations of undying song. On his leaving Brussels, an incident occurred which would be hardly worth relating, were it not for the proof it affords of the malicious assiduity with which everything to his disadvantage was now caught up and circulated in

England. Mr. Pryce Gordon, a gentleman, who appears to have seen a good deal of him during his short stay at Brussels, thus relates the anecdote.

‘ Lord Byron travelled in a huge coach, copied from
‘ the celebrated one of Napoleon, taken at Genappe,
‘ with additions. Besides a *lit de repos*, it contained
‘ a library, a plate-chest, and every apparatus for
‘ dining in it. It was not, however, found sufficiently
‘ capacious for his baggage and suite; and he pur-
‘ chased a calèche at Brussels for his servants. It
‘ broke down going to Waterloo, and I advised him to
‘ return it, as it seemed to be a crazy machine; but as
‘ he had made a deposit of forty Napoleons (certainly
‘ double its value), the honest Fleming would not con-
‘ sent to restore the cash, or take back his packing-
‘ case, except under a forfeiture of thirty Napoleons.
‘ As his lordship was to set out the following day, he
‘ begged me to make the best arrangement I could in
‘ the affair. He had no sooner taken his departure,
‘ than the worthy *sellier* inserted a paragraph in “The
‘ Brussels Oracle,” stating “that the noble *milor An-*
‘ *glais* had absconded with his calèche, value 1800
‘ francs!”’

In the Courier of May 13, the Brussels account of this transaction is thus copied.

‘ The following is an extract from the Dutch Mail,
‘ dated Brussels, May 8th.—In the Journal de Bel-
‘ gique, of this date, is a petition from a coachmaker
‘ at Brussels to the president of the Tribunal de Pre-
‘ mier Instance, stating that he has sold to Lord Byron
‘ a carriage, &c. for 1882 francs, of which he has re-
‘ ceived 847 francs, but that his lordship, who is going
‘ away the same day, refuses to pay him the remaining
‘ 1035 francs; he begs permission to seize the car-

‘riage, &c. This being granted, he put it into the
 ‘hands of a proper officer, who went to signify the
 ‘above to Lord Byron, and was informed by the
 ‘landlord of the hotel that his lordship was gone
 ‘without having given him anything to pay the debt,
 ‘on which the officer seized a chaise belonging to his
 ‘lordship as security for the amount.’

It was not till the beginning of the following month that a contradiction of this falsehood, stating the real circumstances of the case, as above related, was communicated to the Morning Chronicle, in a letter from Brussels, signed ‘Pryce L. Gordon.’

Another anecdote, of far more interest, has been furnished from the same respectable source. It appears that the two first stanzas of the verses relating to Waterloo, ‘Stop, for thy tread is on an empire’s dust*,’ were written at Brussels, after a visit to that memorable field, and transcribed by Lord Byron, next morning, in an album belonging to the lady of the gentleman who communicates the anecdote.

‘A few weeks after he had written them (says the
 ‘relater), the well-known artist, R. R. Reinagle, a
 ‘friend of mine, arrived in Brussels, when I invited
 ‘him to dine with me and showed him the lines, re-
 ‘questing him to embellish them with an appropriate
 ‘vignette to the following passage :—

‘Here his last flight the haughty eagle flew,
 ‘Then tore, with bloody beak, the fatal plain;
 ‘Pierced with the shafts of banded nations through,
 ‘Ambition’s life, and labours, all were vain—
 ‘He wears the shatter’d links of the world’s broken chain.’

‘Mr. Reinagle sketched with a pencil a spirited
 ‘chained eagle, grasping the earth with his talons,

* Childe Harold, Canto iii., stanza 17.

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‘ I had occasion to write to his lordship, and mentioned having got this clever artist to draw a vignette to his beautiful lines, and the liberty he had taken by altering the action of the eagle. In reply to this, he wrote to me—“Reinagle is a better poet and a better ornithologist than I am; eagles, and all birds of prey, attack with their talons, and not with their beaks, and I have altered the line thus—

‘ Then tore, with bloody talon, the rent plain.’

‘ This is, I think, a better line, besides its poetical justice.” I need hardly add, when I communicated this flattering compliment to the painter, that he was highly gratified.’

From Brussels the noble traveller pursued his course along the Rhine,—a line of road which he has strewed over with all the riches of poesy; and, arriving at Geneva, took up his abode at the well-known hotel, Sécheron. After a stay of a few weeks at this place, he removed to a villa, in the neighbourhood, called Diodati, very beautifully situated on the high banks of the Lake, where he established his residence for the remainder of the summer.

I shall now give the few letters in my possession written by him at this time, and then subjoin to them such anecdotes as I have been able to collect relative to the same period.

LETTER 242.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Ouchy, near Lausanne, June 27th, 1816.*

‘ I am thus far (kept by stress of weather) on my way back to Diodati (near Geneva) from a voyage in my boat round the Lake; and I enclose you a sprig of *Gibbon’s acacia* and some rose-leaves from his garden, which, with part of his house, I have just seen.

‘ You will find honourable mention, in his Life, made
‘ of this “acacia,” when he walked out on the night of
‘ concluding his history. The garden and *summer-*
‘ *house*, where he composed, are neglected, and the
‘ last utterly decayed; but they still show it as his
‘ “cabinet,” and seem perfectly aware of his memory.

‘ My route, through Flanders, and by the Rhine,
‘ to Switzerland, was all I expected, and more.

‘ I have traversed all Rousseau’s ground with the
‘ Heloise before me, and am struck to a degree that I
‘ cannot express with the force and accuracy of his
‘ descriptions and the beauty of their reality. Meil-
‘ lerie, Clarens, and Vevay, and the Chateau de
‘ Chillon, are places of which I shall say little,
‘ because all I could say must fall short of the impres-
‘ sions they stamp.

‘ Three days ago, we were most nearly wrecked in
‘ a squall off Meillerie, and driven to shore. I ran no
‘ risk, being so near the rocks, and a good swimmer;
‘ but our party were wet, and incommoded a good
‘ deal. The wind was strong enough to blow down
‘ some trees, as we found at landing: however, all is
‘ righted and right, and we are thus far on our return.

‘ Dr. Polidori is not here, but at Diodati, left behind
‘ in hospital with a sprained ankle, which he acquired
‘ in tumbling from a wall—he can’t jump.

‘ I shall be glad to hear you are well, and have
‘ received for me certain helms and swords, sent from
‘ Waterloo, which I rode over with pain and plea-
‘ sure.

‘ I have finished a third Canto of Childe Harold
‘ (consisting of one hundred and seventeen stanzas),
‘ longer than either of the two former, and in some
‘ parts, it may be, better; but of course on that I

‘ cannot determine. I shall send it by the first safe-
 ‘ looking opportunity. Ever, &c.’

LETTER 243.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Diodati, near Geneva, July 22d, 1816.*

‘ I wrote to you a few weeks ago, and Dr. Polidori
 ‘ received your letter; but the packet has not made its
 ‘ appearance, nor the epistle, of which you gave notice
 ‘ therein. I enclose you an advertisement*, which
 ‘ was copied by Dr. Polidori, and which appears to be
 ‘ about the most impudent imposition that ever issued
 ‘ from Grub-street. I need hardly say that I know
 ‘ nothing of all this trash, nor whence it may spring,—
 ‘ “Odes to St. Helena,”—“Farewells to England,”
 ‘ &c. &c.—and if it can be disavowed, or is worth dis-
 ‘ avowing, you have full authority to do so. I never
 ‘ wrote, nor conceived, a line on anything of the kind,
 ‘ any more than of two other things with which I was
 ‘ saddled—something about “Gaul,” and another about
 ‘ “Mrs. La Valette;” and as to the “Lily of France,”
 ‘ I should as soon think of celebrating a turnip. “On
 ‘ the morning of my daughter’s birth,” I had other
 ‘ things to think of than verses; and should never
 ‘ have dreamed of such an invention, till Mr. Johnston
 ‘ and his pamphlet’s advertisement broke in upon me
 ‘ with a new light on the crafts and subtleties of the
 ‘ demon of printing,—or rather publishing.

* The following was the advertisement enclosed :

‘ Neatly printed and hot-pressed, 2s. 6d.,
 ‘ Lord Byron’s Farewell to England, with Three other Poems—Ode
 ‘ to St. Helena, to My Daughter on her Birthday, and To the Lily of
 ‘ France.

‘ Printed by J. Johnston, Cheapside, 335; Oxford, 9.

‘ The above beautiful Poems will be read with the most lively interest,
 ‘ as it is probable they will be the last of the author’s that will appear in
 ‘ England.’

‘ I did hope that some succeeding lie would have
 ‘ superseded the thousand and one which were accu-
 ‘ mulated during last winter. I can forgive whatever
 ‘ may be said of or against me, but not what they make
 ‘ me say or sing for myself. It is enough to answer
 ‘ for what I have written ; but it were too much for
 ‘ Job himself to bear what one has not. I suspect that
 ‘ when the Arab Patriarch wished that his “ enemy
 ‘ had written a book,” he did not anticipate his own
 ‘ name on the title-page. I feel quite as much bored
 ‘ with this foolery as it deserves, and more than I
 ‘ should be if I had not a headache.

‘ Of Glenarvon, Madame de Staël told me (ten days
 ‘ ago, at Copet) marvellous and grievous things ; but I
 ‘ have seen nothing of it but the motto, which promises
 ‘ amiably. “ for us and for our tragedy.” If such be
 ‘ the posy, what should the ring be?—“ a name to all
 ‘ succeeding*,” &c. The generous moment selected
 ‘ for the publication is probably its kindest accompani-
 ‘ ment, and—truth to say—the time *was* well chosen.
 ‘ I have not even a guess at the contents, except from
 ‘ the very vague accounts I have heard.

‘ I ought to be ashamed of the egotism of this letter.
 ‘ It is not my fault altogether, and I shall be but too
 ‘ happy to drop the subject when others will allow
 ‘ me.

‘ I am in tolerable plight, and in my last letter told
 ‘ you what I had done in the way of all rhyme. I trust
 ‘ that you prosper, and that your authors are in good
 ‘ condition. I should suppose your stud has received
 ‘ some increase by what I hear. Bertram must be a

* The motto is—

‘ He left a name to all succeeding times,
 ‘ Link’d with one virtue and a thousand crimes.’

‘ good horse ; does he run next meeting ? I hope you
‘ will beat the Row. Yours alway, &c.’

LETTER 244.

TO MR. ROGERS.

‘ *Diodati, near Geneva, July 29th, 1816.*

‘ Do you recollect a book, Mathieson’s Letters,
‘ which you lent me, which I have still, and yet hope
‘ to return to your library ? Well, I have encountered
‘ at Copet and elsewhere Gray’s correspondent, that
‘ same Bonstetten, to whom I lent the translation of his
‘ correspondent’s epistles, for a few days ; but all he
‘ could remember of Gray amounts to little, except
‘ that he was the most “ melancholy and gentleman-
‘ like ” of all possible poets. Bonstetten himself is a
‘ fine and very lively old man, and much esteemed by
‘ his compatriots ; he is also a *littérateur* of good
‘ repute, and all his friends have a mania of address-
‘ ing to him volumes of letters—Mathieson, Muller the
‘ historian, &c. &c. He is a good deal at Copet, where
‘ I have met him a few times. All there are well,
‘ except Rocca, who, I am sorry to say, looks in a very
‘ bad state of health. Schlegel is in high force, and
‘ Madame as brilliant as ever.

‘ I came here by the Netherlands and the Rhine
‘ route, and Basle, Berne, Morat, and Lausanne. I
‘ have circumnavigated the Lake, and go to Chamouni
‘ with the first fair weather ; but really we have had
‘ lately such stupid mists, fogs, and perpetual density,
‘ that one would think Castlereagh had the Foreign
‘ Affairs of the kingdom of Heaven also on his hands.
‘ I need say nothing to you of these parts, you having
‘ traversed them already. I do not think of Italy before
‘ September. I have read Glenarvon, and have also
‘ seen Ben. Constant’s Adolphe, and his preface, deny-

‘ing the real people. It is a work which leaves an
 ‘unpleasant impression, but very consistent with the
 ‘consequences of not being in love, which is perhaps
 ‘as disagreeable as anything, except being so. I
 ‘doubt, however, whether all such *liens* (as he calls
 ‘them) terminate so wretchedly as his hero and
 ‘heroine’s.

‘There is a third Canto (a longer than either of the
 ‘former) of Childe Harold finished, and some smaller
 ‘things,—among them a story on the Chateau de
 ‘Chillon; I only wait a good opportunity to transmit
 ‘them to the grand Murray, who, I hope, flourishes.
 ‘Where is Moore? Why is he not out? My love to
 ‘him, and my perfect consideration and remembrances
 ‘to all, particularly to Lord and Lady Holland, and to
 ‘your Duchess of Somerset. Ever, &c.

‘P.S. I send you a *fac simile*, a note of Bonstetten’s
 ‘thinking you might like to see the hand of Gray’s
 ‘correspondent.’

LETTER 245.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘*Diodati, Sept. 29th, 1816.*

‘I am very much flattered by Mr. Gifford’s good
 ‘opinion of the MSS., and shall be still more so if it
 ‘answers your expectations and justifies his kindness.
 ‘I liked it myself, but that must go for nothing. The
 ‘feelings with which most of it was written need not
 ‘be envied me. With regard to the price, I fixed
 ‘*none*, but left it to Mr. Kinnaird, Mr. Shelley, and
 ‘yourself, to arrange. Of course, they would do their
 ‘best; and as to yourself, I knew you would make no
 ‘difficulties. But I agree with Mr. Kinnaird per-
 ‘fectly, that the concluding *five hundred* should be
 ‘*only conditional*; and for my own sake, I wish it to

‘ be added, only in case of your selling a certain n m-
‘ ber, *that number* to be fixed by *yourself*. I hope this
‘ is fair. In everything of this kind there must be
‘ risk; and till that be past, in one way or the other,
‘ I would not willingly add to it, particularly in times
‘ like the present. And pray always recollect that
‘ nothing could mortify me more—no failure on my
‘ own part—than having made you lose by any pur-
‘ chase from me.

‘ The Monody* was written by request of Mr. Kin-
‘ naird for the theatre. I did as well as I could; but
‘ where I have not my choice, I pretend to answer for
‘ nothing. Mr. Hobhouse and myself are just returned
‘ from a journey of lakes and mountains. We have
‘ been to the Grindelwald, and the Jungfrau, and stood
‘ on the summit of the Wengen Alp; and seen torrents
‘ of nine hundred feet in fall, and glaciers of all dimen-
‘ sions: we have heard shepherds’ pipes, and ava-
‘ lanches, and looked on the clouds foaming up from
‘ the valleys below us, like the spray of the ocean of
‘ hell. Chamouni, and that which it inherits, we saw
‘ a month ago; but, though Mont Blanc is higher, it
‘ is not equal in wildness to the Jungfrau, the Eighers,
‘ the Shreckhorn, and the Rose Glaciers.

‘ We set off for Italy next week. The road is within
‘ this month infested with bandits, but we must take
‘ our chance and such precautions as are requisite.

‘ Ever, &c.’

‘ P. S. My best remembrances to Mr. Gifford.
‘ Pray say all that can be said from me to him.

‘ I am sorry that Mr. Maturin did not like Phillips’

* A Monody on the death of Sheridan, which was spoken at Drury-lane theatre.

‘ picture. I thought it was reckoned a good one.
 ‘ If he had made the speech on the original, perhaps
 ‘ he would have been more readily forgiven by the
 ‘ proprietor and the painter of the portrait * * *’.

LETTER 246.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Diodati, Sept. 30th, 1816.*

‘ I answered your obliging letters yesterday : to-day
 ‘ the Monody arrived with its *title*-page, which is, I
 ‘ presume, a separate publication. “ The request of
 ‘ a friend :”—

“ Obligated by hunger and request of friends.”

‘ I will request you to expunge that same, unless you
 ‘ please to add, “ by a person of quality,” or “ of wit
 ‘ and honour about town.” Merely say, “ written to
 ‘ be spoken at Drury-lane.” To-morrow I dine at
 ‘ Copet. Saturday I strike tents for Italy. This
 ‘ evening, on the lake in my boat with Mr. Hobhouse,
 ‘ the pole which sustains the mainsail slipped in tack-
 ‘ ing, and struck me so violently on one of my legs (the
 ‘ *worst*, luckily) as to make me do a foolish thing, viz.
 ‘ to *faint*—a downright swoon; the thing must have
 ‘ jarred some nerve or other, for the bone is not in-
 ‘ jured, and hardly painful (it is six hours since), and
 ‘ cost Mr. Hobhouse some apprehension and much
 ‘ sprinkling of water to recover me. The sensation
 ‘ was a very odd one: I never had but two such be-
 ‘ fore, once from a cut on the head from a stone, seve-
 ‘ ral years ago, and once (long ago also) in falling into
 ‘ a great wreath of snow;—a sort of gray giddiness
 ‘ first, then nothingness, and a total loss of memory on
 ‘ beginning to recover. The last part is not disagree-
 ‘ able, if one did not find it again.

‘ You want the original MSS. Mr. Davies has the
‘ first fair copy in my own hand, and I have the rough
‘ composition here, and will send or save it for you,
‘ since you wish it.

‘ With regard to your new literary project, if any-
‘ thing falls in the way which will, to the best of my
‘ judgment, suit you, I will send you what I can. At
‘ present I must lay by a little, having pretty well ex-
‘ hausted myself in what I have sent you. Italy or
‘ Dalmatia and another summer may, or may not, set
‘ me off again. I have no plans, and am nearly as
‘ indifferent what may come as where I go. I shall
‘ take Felicia Heman’s Restoration, &c. with me ; it is
‘ a good poem—very.

‘ Pray repeat my best thanks and remembrances to
‘ Mr. Gifford for all his trouble and good-nature to-
‘ wards me.

‘ Do not fancy me laid up, from the beginning of
‘ this scrawl. I tell you the accident, for want of
‘ better to say ; but it is over, and I am only wonder-
‘ ing what the deuce was the matter with me.

‘ I have lately been over all the Bernese Alps and
‘ their lakes. I think many of the scenes (some of
‘ which were not those usually frequented by the
‘ English) finer than Chamouni, which I visited some
‘ time before. I have been to Clarens again, and
‘ crossed the mountains behind it : of this tour I kept
‘ a short journal for my sister, which I sent yesterday
‘ in three letters. It is not all for perusal ; but if you
‘ like to hear about the romantic part, she will, I dare
‘ say, show you what touches upon the rocks, &c.

‘ Christabel—I won’t have any one sneer at Christ-
‘ abel : it is a fine wild poem.

‘ Madame de Staël wishes to see the Antiquary, and

‘ I am going to take it to her to-morrow. She has
 ‘ made Copet as agreeable as society and talent can
 ‘ make any place on earth. Yours ever,

‘ N.’

From the Journal mentioned in the foregoing letter,
 I am enabled to give the following extracts.

EXTRACTS FROM A JOURNAL.

‘ *September 18th, 1816.*

‘ Yesterday, September 17th, I set out with Mr.
 ‘ Hobhouse on an excursion of some days to the moun-
 ‘ tains.

‘ *September 17th.*

‘ Rose at five; left Diodati about seven, in one of
 ‘ the country carriages (a char-à-banc), our servants
 ‘ on horseback. Weather very fine; the lake calm
 ‘ and clear; Mont Blanc and the Aiguille of Argen-
 ‘ tières both very distinct; the borders of the lake
 ‘ beautiful. Reached Lausanne before sunset; stopped
 ‘ and slept at ——. Went to bed at nine; slept till
 ‘ five o’clock.

‘ *September 18th.*

‘ Called by my courier; got up. Hobhouse walked
 ‘ on before. A mile from Lausanne, the road over-
 ‘ flowed by the lake; got on horseback and rode till
 ‘ within a mile of Vevay. The colt young, but went
 ‘ very well. Overtook Hobhouse, and resumed the
 ‘ carriage, which is an open one. Stopped at Vevay
 ‘ two hours (the second time I had visited it); walked
 ‘ to the church; view from the churchyard superb;
 ‘ within it General Ludlow (the regicide’s) monument
 ‘ —black marble—long inscription—Latin, but simple;
 ‘ he was an exile two-and-thirty-years—one of King
 ‘ Charles’s judges. Near him Broughton (who read

‘ King Charles’s sentence to Charles Stuart) is buried,
‘ with a queer and rather canting, but still a republi-
‘ can, inscription. Ludlow’s house shown; it retains
‘ still its inscription—“Omne solum forti patria.”
‘ Walked down to the Lake side; servants, carriage,
‘ saddle-horses—all set off and left us *plantés là*, by
‘ some mistake, and we walked on after them towards
‘ Clarens; Hobhouse ran on before, and overtook
‘ them at last. Arrived the second time (first time
‘ was by water) at Clarens. Went to Chillon through
‘ scenery worthy of I know not whom; went over the
‘ Castle of Chillon again. On our return met an
‘ English party in a carriage; a lady in it fast asleep
‘ —fast asleep in the most anti-narcotic spot in the
‘ world—excellent! I remember at Chamouni, in the
‘ very eyes of Mont Blanc, hearing another woman,
‘ English also, exclaim to her party, “Did you ever
‘ see anything more *rural*?”—as if it was Highgate,
‘ or Hampstead, or Brompton, or Hayes,—“Rural!”
‘ quotha?—Rocks, pines, torrents, glaciers, clouds,
‘ and summits of eternal snow far above them—and
‘ “rural!”

‘ After a slight and short dinner we visited the
‘ Chateau de Clarens; an Englishwoman has rented
‘ it recently (it was not let when I saw it first); the
‘ roses are gone with their summer; the family out,
‘ but the servants desired us to walk over the interior
‘ of the mansion. Saw on the table of the saloon
‘ Blair’s Sermons and somebody else (I forget who’s)
‘ sermons, and a set of noisy children. Saw all worth
‘ seeing, and then descended to the “Bosquet de
‘ Julie,” &c. &c.; our guide full of Rousseau, whom
‘ he is eternally confounding with St. Preux, and
‘ mixing the man and the book. Went again as far

‘ as Chillon to revisit the little torrent from the hill
‘ behind it. Sunset reflected in the lake. Have to
‘ get up at five to-morrow to cross the mountains on
‘ horseback ; carriage to be sent round ; lodged at my
‘ old cottage—hospitable and comfortable ; tired with
‘ a longish ride on the colt, and the subsequent jolt-
‘ ing of the char-à-banc, and my scramble in the hot
‘ sun.

‘ Mem. The corporal who showed the wonders of
‘ Chillon was as drunk as Blucher, and (to my mind) as
‘ great a man ; he was deaf also, and thinking every
‘ one else so, roared out the legends of the castle so
‘ fearfully that H. got out of humour. However, we
‘ saw things from the gallows to the dungeons (the
‘ *potence* and the *cachots*), and returned to Clarens
‘ with more freedom than belonged to the fifteenth
‘ century.

‘ *September 19th.*

‘ Rose at five. Crossed the mountains to Mont-
‘ bovon on horseback, and on mules, and, by dint of
‘ scrambling, on foot also ; the whole route beautiful
‘ as a dream, and now to me almost as indistinct. I
‘ am so tired ;—for though healthy, I have not the
‘ strength I possessed but a few years ago. At Mont-
‘ bovon we breakfasted ; afterwards, on a steep ascent,
‘ dismounted ; tumbled down ; cut a finger open ; the
‘ baggage also got loose and fell down a ravine, till
‘ stopped by a large tree ; recovered baggage ; horse
‘ tired and drooping ; mounted mule. At the approach
‘ of the summit of Dent Jument* dismounted again
‘ with Hobhouse and all the party. Arrived at a lake
‘ in the very bosom of the mountains ; left our quad-

* Dent de Jaman.

‘ rupeds with a shepherd, and ascended farther ; came
‘ to some snow in patches, upon which my forehead’s
‘ perspiration fell like rain, making the same dints as
‘ in a sieve ; the chill of the wind and the snow turned
‘ me giddy, but I scrambled on and upwards. Hob-
‘ house went to the highest pinnacle ; I did not,
‘ but paused within a few yards (at an opening of the
‘ cliff). In coming down, the guide tumbled three
‘ times ; I fell a laughing, and tumbled too—the
‘ descent luckily soft, though steep and slippery :
‘ Hobhouse also fell, but nobody hurt. The whole of
‘ the mountains superb. A shepherd on a very steep
‘ and high cliff playing upon his *pipe* ; very different
‘ from *Arcadia*, where I saw the pastors with a long
‘ musket instead of a crook, and pistols in their girdles.
‘ Our Swiss shepherd’s pipe was sweet, and his tune
‘ agreeable. I saw a cow strayed ; am told that they
‘ often break their necks on and over the crags. De-
‘ scended to Montbovon ; pretty scraggy village, with
‘ a wild river and a wooden bridge. Hobhouse went
‘ to fish—caught one. Our carriage not come ; our
‘ horses, mules, &c. knocked up ; ourselves fatigued ;
‘ but so much the better—I shall sleep.

‘ The view from the highest points of to-day’s jour-
‘ ney comprised on one side the greatest part of Lake
‘ Lemman ; on the other, the valleys and mountain of
‘ the Canton of Fribourg, and an immense plain, with
‘ the lakes of Neuchâtel and Morat, and all which the
‘ borders of the Lake of Geneva inherit ; we had both
‘ sides of the Jura before us in one point of view, with
‘ Alps in plenty. In passing a ravine, the guide re-
‘ commended strenuously a quickening of pace, as the
‘ stones fall with great rapidity and occasional damage ;
‘ the advice is excellent, but, like most good advice,

‘ impracticable, the road being so rough that neither
‘ mules, nor mankind, nor horses, can make any vio-
‘ lent progress. Passed without fractures or menace
‘ thereof.

‘ The music of the cow’s bells (for their wealth, like
‘ the patriarchs’, is cattle) in the pastures, which reach
‘ to a height far above any mountains in Britain, and
‘ the shepherds shouting to us from crag to crag, and
‘ playing on their reeds where the steeps appeared
‘ almost inaccessible, with the surrounding scenery,
‘ realized all that I have ever heard or imagined of a
‘ pastoral existence:—much more so than Greece or
‘ Asia Minor, for there we are a little too much of the
‘ sabre and musket order, and if there is a crook in
‘ one hand, you are sure to see a gun in the other:—
‘ but this was pure and unmixed—solitary, savage,
‘ and patriarchal. As we went, they played the
‘ “Rans des Vaches” and other airs, by way of fare-
‘ well. I have lately repeopled my mind with nature.

‘ *September 20th.*

‘ Up at six; off at eight. The whole of this day’s
‘ journey at an average of between from 2700 to 3000
‘ feet above the level of the sea. This valley, the
‘ longest, narrowest, and considered the finest of the
‘ Alps, little traversed by travellers. Saw the bridge
‘ of La Roche. The bed of the river very low and
‘ deep, between immense rocks, and rapid as anger;
‘ —a man and mule said to have tumbled over
‘ without damage. The people looked free, and happy,
‘ and *rich* (which last implies neither of the former);
‘ the cows superb; a bull nearly leapt into the char-
‘ à-banc—“agreeable companion in a postchaise;”
‘ goats and sheep very thriving. A mountain with
‘ enormous glaciers to the right—the Klitzgerberg;

‘ further on, the Hockthorn—nice names—so soft!—
‘ *Stockhorn*, I believe, very lofty and scraggy, patched
‘ with snow only; no glaciers on it, but some good
‘ epaulettes of clouds.

‘ Passed the boundaries, out of Vaud and into
‘ Berne canton; French exchanged for bad German;
‘ the district famous for cheese, liberty, property, and
‘ no taxes. Hobhouse went to fish—caught none.
‘ Strolled to the river; saw boy and kid; kid followed
‘ him like a dog; kid could not get over a fence, and
‘ bleated piteously; tried myself to help kid, but nearly
‘ upset both self and kid into the river. Arrived
‘ here about six in the evening. Nine o’clock—going
‘ to bed; not tired to day, but hope to sleep, never-
‘ theless.

‘ *September 21st.*

‘ Off early. The valley of Simmenthal as before.
‘ Entrance to the plain of Thoun very narrow; high
‘ rocks, wooded to the top; river; new mountains,
‘ with fine glaciers. Lake of Thoun; extensive plain
‘ with a girdle of Alps. Walked down to the Chateau
‘ de Schadau; view along the lake; crossed the river
‘ in a boat rowed by women. Thoun a very pretty
‘ town. The whole day’s journey Alpine and proud.

‘ *September 22nd.*

‘ Left Thoun in a boat, which carried us the length
‘ of the lake in three hours. The lake small; but the
‘ banks fine. Rocks down to the water’s edge. Landed
‘ at Newhouse; passed Interlachen; entered upon a
‘ range of scenes beyond all description or previous
‘ conception. Passed a rock; inscription—two bro-
‘ thers—one murdered the other; just the place for
‘ it. After a variety of windings came to an enormous
‘ rock. Arrived at the foot of the mountain (the

‘ Jungfrau, that is, the Maiden); glaciers; torrents;
 ‘ one of these torrents *nine hundred feet* in height of
 ‘ visible descent. Lodged at the curate’s. Set out
 ‘ to see the valley; heard an avalanche fall, like thun-
 ‘ der; glaciers enormous; storm came on, thunder,
 ‘ lightning, hail; all in perfection, and beautiful. I
 ‘ was on horseback; guide wanted to carry my cane;
 ‘ I was going to give it him, when I recollected that it
 ‘ was a sword-stick, and I thought the lightning might
 ‘ be attracted towards him; kept it myself; a good
 ‘ deal encumbered with it, as it was too heavy for a
 ‘ whip, and the horse was stupid, and stood with every
 ‘ other peal. Got in, not very wet, the cloak being
 ‘ stanch. Hobhouse wet through; Hobhouse took
 ‘ refuge in cottage; sent man, umbrella, and cloak
 ‘ (from the curate’s when I arrived) after him. Swiss
 ‘ curate’s house very good indeed—much better than
 ‘ most English vicarages. It is immediately opposite
 ‘ the torrent I spoke of. The torrent is in shape
 ‘ curving over the rock, like the *tail* of a white horse
 ‘ streaming in the wind, such as it might be conceived
 ‘ would be that of the “pale horse” on which Death
 ‘ is mounted in the Apocalypse*. It is neither mist
 ‘ nor water, but a something between both; its im-
 ‘ mense height (nine hundred feet) gives it a wave or
 ‘ curve, a spreading here, or condensation there, won-

* It is interesting to observe the use to which he afterwards converted these hasty memorandums in his sublime drama of *Manfred*.

‘ It is not noon—the sunbow’s rays still arch
 ‘ The torrent with the many hues of heaven,
 ‘ And roll the sheeted silver’s waving column
 ‘ O’er the crag’s headlong perpendicular,
 ‘ And fling its lines of foaming light along,
 ‘ *And to and fro, like the pale courser’s tail,*
 ‘ *The Giant steed, to be bestrode by Death,*
 ‘ *As told in the Apocalypse.*’

‘ derful and indescribable. I think, upon the whole,
 ‘ that this day has been better than any of this presen
 ‘ excursion.

‘ *September 23d.*

‘ Before ascending the mountain, went to the tor-
 ‘ rent (seven in the morning) again; the sun upon it,
 ‘ forming a *rainbow* of the lower part of all colours,
 ‘ but principally purple and gold; the bow moving as
 ‘ you move; I never saw anything like this; it is only
 ‘ in the sunshine. Ascended the Wengen mountain;
 ‘ at noon reached a valley on the summit; left the
 ‘ horses, took off my coat, and went to the summit,
 ‘ seven thousand feet (English feet) above the level of
 ‘ the *sea*, and about five thousand above the valley we
 ‘ left in the morning. On one side, our view com-
 ‘ prised the Jungfrau, with all her glaciers; then the
 ‘ Dent d’Argent, shining like truth; then the Little
 ‘ Giant (the *Kleine Eigher*); and the Great Giant (the
 ‘ *Grosse Eigher*), and last, not least, the Wetterhorn.
 ‘ The height of Jungfrau is 13,000 feet above the sea,
 ‘ 11,000 above the valley: she is the highest of this
 ‘ range. Heard the avalanches falling every five mi-
 ‘ nutes nearly. From whence we stood, on the Wengen
 ‘ Alp, we had all these in view on one side; on the
 ‘ other, the clouds rose from the opposite valley, curl-
 ‘ ing up perpendicular precipices like the foam of the
 ‘ ocean of hell, during a spring tide—it was white,
 ‘ and sulphury, and immeasurably deep in appear-
 ‘ ance*. The side we ascended was (of course) not of

* ‘ *Ye avalanches, whom a breath draws down*
 ‘ *In mountainous o’erwhelming, come and crush me!*
 ‘ *I hear ye momentarily above, beneath,*
 ‘ *Crash with a frequent conflict. * * **
 ‘ *The mists boil up around the glaciers; clouds*
 ‘ *Rise curling fast beneath me, white and sulphury,*
 ‘ *Like foam from the roused ocean of deep hell!*

MANFRED.

‘ so precipitous a nature ; but on arriving at the sum-
 ‘ mit, we looked down upon the other side upon a boil-
 ‘ ing sea of cloud, dashing against the crags on which
 ‘ we stood (these crags on one side quite perpendicu-
 ‘ lar.) Stayed a quarter of an hour ; begun to descend ;
 ‘ quite clear from cloud on that side of the mountain.
 ‘ In passing the masses of snow, I made a snowball
 ‘ and pelted Hobhouse with it.

‘ Got down to our horses again ; ate something ;
 ‘ remounted ; heard the avalanches still ; came to a
 ‘ morass ; Hobhouse dismounted to get over well ; I
 ‘ tried to pass my horse over ; the horse sunk up to the
 ‘ chin, and of course he and I were in the mud toge-
 ‘ ther ; bemired, but not hurt ; laughed, and rode on.
 ‘ Arrived at the Grindelwald ; dined, mounted again,
 ‘ and rode to the higher glacier—like a *frozen hurri-*
 ‘ *cane**. Starlight, beautiful, but a devil of a path !
 ‘ Never mind, got safe in ; a little lightning, but the
 ‘ whole of the day as fine in point of weather as the
 ‘ day on which Paradise was made. Passed *whole*
 ‘ *woods of withered pines, all withered ;* trunks stripped
 ‘ and barkless, branches lifeless ; done by a single
 ‘ winter†,—their appearance reminded me of me and
 ‘ my family.

‘ *September 24th.*

‘ Set off at seven ; up at five. Passed the black
 ‘ glacier, the mountain Wetterhorn on the right ;
 ‘ crossed the Scheideck mountain ; came to the *Rose*

• ‘ O’er the savage sea,
 ‘ The glassy ocean of the mountain ice,
 ‘ We skim its rugged breakers, which put on
 ‘ The aspect of a tumbling *tempest’s* foam,
 ‘ Frozen in a moment.’ MANFRED.

† ‘ Like these *blasted pines,*
 ‘ Wrecks of a single winter, barkless, branchless.’ IBID.

‘ glacier, said to be the largest and finest in Switzer-
‘ land. I think the Bossons glacier at Chamouni as
‘ fine; Hobhouse does not. Came to the Reichenbach
‘ waterfall, two hundred feet high; halted to rest the
‘ horses. Arrived in the valley of Overland; rain came
‘ on; drenched a little; only four hours’ rain, however,
‘ in eight days. Came to the lake of Brientz, then
‘ to the town of Brientz; changed. In the evening,
‘ four Swiss peasant girls of Oberhasli came and sang
‘ the airs of their country; two of the voices beautiful
‘ —the tunes also; so wild and original, and at the
‘ same time of great sweetness. The singing is over;
‘ but below stairs I hear the notes of a fiddle, which
‘ bode no good to my night’s rest; I shall go down and
‘ see the dancing.

‘ *September 25th.*

‘ The whole town of Brientz were apparently gathered
‘ together in the rooms below; pretty music and excel-
‘ lent waltzing; none but peasants; the dancing much
‘ better than in England; the English can’t waltz,
‘ never could, never will. One man with his pipe in
‘ his mouth, but danced as well as the others; some
‘ other dances in pairs and in fours, and very good. I
‘ went to bed, but the revelry continued below late and
‘ early. Brientz but a village. Rose early. Embarked
‘ on the lake of Brientz; rowed by the women in a
‘ long boat; presently we put to shore, and another
‘ woman jumped in. It seems it is the custom here
‘ for the boats to be *manned by women*: for of five men
‘ and three women in our bark, all the women took an
‘ oar, and but one man.

‘ Got to Interlachen in three hours; pretty lake;
‘ not so large as that of Thoun. Dined at Interlachen.
‘ Girl gave me some flowers, and made me a speech in

‘ German, of which I know nothing; I do not know
‘ whether the speech was pretty, but as the woman
‘ was, I hope so. Re-embarked on the lake of Thoun;
‘ fell asleep part of the way; sent our horses round;
‘ found people on the shore, blowing up a rock with
‘ gunpowder; they blew it up near our boat, only tell-
‘ ing us a minute before;—mere stupidity, but they
‘ might have broken our noddles. Got to Thoun in
‘ the evening; the weather has been tolerable the
‘ whole day. But as the wild part of our tour is
‘ finished, it don’t matter to us; in all the desirable
‘ part, we have been most lucky in warmth and clear-
‘ ness of atmosphere.

‘ *September 26th.*

‘ Being out of the mountains, my journal must be
‘ as flat as my journey. From Thoun to Berne, good
‘ road, hedges, villages, industry, property, and all sorts
‘ of tokens of insipid civilization. From Berne to Fri-
‘ bourg; different canton; Catholics; passed a field of
‘ battle; Swiss beat the French in one of the late wars
‘ against the French republic. Bought a dog. The
‘ greater part of this tour has been on horseback, on
‘ foot, and on mule.

‘ *September 28th.*

‘ Saw the tree planted in honour of the battle of
‘ Morat; three hundred and forty years old; a good
‘ deal decayed. Left Fribourg, but first saw the
‘ cathedral; high tower. Overtook the baggage of the
‘ nuns of La Trappe, who are removing to Normandy;
‘ afterwards a coach, with a quantity of nuns in it.
‘ Proceeded along the banks of the lake of Neuchatel;
‘ very pleasing and soft, but not so mountainous—at

‘ least, the Jura, not appearing so, after the Bernese
‘ Alps. Reached Yverdun in the dusk ; a long line
‘ of large trees on the border of the lake ; fine and
‘ sombre ; the Auberge nearly full—a German princess
‘ and suite ; got rooms.

‘ *September 29th.*

‘ Passed through a fine and flourishing country, but
‘ not mountainous. In the evening reached Aubonne
‘ (the entrance and bridge something like that of Dur-
‘ ham), which commands by far the fairest view of the
‘ Lake of Geneva ; twilight ; the moon on the lake ; a
‘ grove on the height, and of very noble trees. Here
‘ Tavernier (the eastern traveller) bought (or built) the
‘ chateau, because the site resembled and equalled that
‘ of *Erivan*, a frontier city of Persia ; here he finished
‘ his voyages, and I this little excursion,—for I am
‘ within a few hours of Diodati, and have little more
‘ to see, and no more to say.’

With the following melancholy passage this Journal concludes :—

‘ In the weather for this tour (of 13 days), I have
‘ been very fortunate—fortunate in a companion
‘ (Mr. H.)—fortunate in our prospects, and exempt
‘ from even the little petty accidents and delays which
‘ often render journeys in a less wild country disappoint-
‘ ing. I was disposed to be pleased. I am a lover of
‘ nature and an admirer of beauty. I can bear fatigue
‘ and welcome privation, and have seen some of the
‘ noblest views in the world. But in all this—the
‘ recollection of bitterness, and more especially of
‘ recent and more home desolation, which must accom-
‘ pany me through life, have preyed upon me here ;

‘ and neither the music of the shepherd, the crashing
‘ of the avalanche, nor the torrent, the mountain, the
‘ glacier, the forest, nor the cloud, have for one moment
‘ lightened the weight upon my heart, nor enabled me
‘ to lose my own wretched identity in the majesty, and
‘ the power, and the glory, around, above, and be-
‘ neath me.’

Among the inmates at Sécheron, on his arrival at Geneva, Lord Byron had found Mr. and Mrs. Shelley, and a female relative of the latter, who had about a fortnight before taken up their residence at this hotel. It was the first time that Lord Byron and Mr. Shelley ever met; though, long before, when the latter was quite a youth,—being the younger of the two by four or five years,—he had sent to the noble poet a copy of his *Queen Mab*, accompanied by a letter, in which, after detailing at full length all the accusations he had heard brought against his character, he added, that, should these charges not have been true, it would make him happy to be honoured with his acquaintance. The book alone, it appears, reached its destination,—the letter having miscarried,—and Lord Byron was known to have expressed warm admiration of the opening lines of the poem.

There was, therefore, on their present meeting at Geneva, no want of disposition towards acquaintance on either side, and an intimacy almost immediately sprung up between them. Among the tastes common to both, that for boating was not the least strong; and in this beautiful region they had more than ordinary temptations to indulge in it. Every evening, during their residence under the same roof at Sécheron, they embarked, accompanied by the ladies and Polidori, on

the Lake ; and to the feelings and fancies inspired by these excursions, which were not unfrequently prolonged into the hours of moonlight, we are indebted for some of those enchanting stanzas*, in which the poet has given way to his passionate love of Nature so fervidly.

‘ There breathes a living fragrance from the shore
 ‘ Of flowers yet fresh with childhood ; on the ear
 ‘ Drips the light drop of the suspended oar.

* * * * *

‘ At intervals, some bird from out the brakes
 ‘ Starts into voice a moment, then is still.
 ‘ There seems a floating whisper on the hill,
 ‘ But that is fancy,—for the starlight dew
 ‘ All silently their tears of love instil,
 ‘ Weeping themselves away.’

A person who was of these parties has thus described to me one of their evenings. ‘ When the *bise* or north-east wind blows, the waters of the Lake are driven towards the town, and, with the stream of the Rhone, which sets strongly in the same direction, combine to make a very rapid current towards the harbour. Carelessly, one evening, we had yielded to its course, till we found ourselves almost driven on the piles ; and it required all our rowers’ strength to master the tide. The waves were high and inspiriting,—we were all animated by our contest with the elements. “ I will sing you an Albanian song,” cried Lord Byron ; “ now, be sentimental and give me all your attention.” It was a strange, wild howl that he gave forth ; but such as, he declared, was an exact imitation of the savage Albanian mode,—laughing, the while, at our disappointment, who had expected a wild Eastern melody.’

Sometimes the party landed, for a walk upon the

* *Childe Harold*, Canto iii.

shore, and, on such occasions, Lord Byron would loiter behind the rest, lazily trailing his sword-stick along, and moulding, as he went, his thronging thoughts into shape. Often too, when in the boat, he would lean abstractedly over the side, and surrender himself up, in silence, to the same absorbing task.

The conversation of Mr. Shelley, from the extent of his poetic reading, and the strange, mystic speculations into which his system of philosophy led him, was of a nature strongly to arrest and interest the attention of Lord Byron, and to turn him away from worldly associations and topics into more abstract and untrodden ways of thought. As far as contrast, indeed, is an enlivening ingredient of such intercourse, it would be difficult to find two persons more formed to whet each other's faculties by discussion, as on few points of common interest between them did their opinions agree; and that this difference had its root deep in the conformation of their respective minds needs but a glance through the rich, glittering labyrinth of Mr. Shelley's pages to assure us.

In Lord Byron, the real was never forgotten in the fanciful. However Imagination had placed her whole realm at his disposal, he was no less a man of this world than a ruler of hers; and, accordingly, through the airiest and most subtile creations of his brain still the life-blood of truth and reality circulates. With Shelley it was far otherwise;—his fancy (and he had sufficient for a whole generation of poets) was the medium through which he saw all things, his facts as well as his theories; and not only the greater part of his poetry, but the political and philosophical speculations in which he indulged, were all distilled through the same over-refining and unrealizing alem-

bic. Having started as a teacher and reformer of the world, at an age when he could know nothing of the world but from fancy, the persecution he met with on the threshold of this boyish enterprise but confirmed him in his first paradoxical views of human ills and their remedies; and, instead of waiting to take lessons of authority and experience, he, with a courage, admirable had it been but wisely directed, made war upon both. From this sort of self-willed start in the world, an impulse was at once given to his opinions and powers directly contrary, it would seem, to their natural bias, and from which his life was too short to allow him time to recover. With a mind, by nature, fervidly pious, he yet refused to acknowledge a Supreme Providence, and substituted some airy abstraction of 'Universal love' in its place. An aristocrat by birth and, as I understand, also in appearance and manners, he was yet a leveller in politics, and to such an Utopian extent as to be, seriously, the advocate of a community of property. With a delicacy and even romance of sentiment, which lends such grace to some of his lesser poems, he could notwithstanding contemplate a change in the relations of the sexes, which would have led to results fully as gross as his arguments for it were fastidious and refined; and though benevolent and generous to an extent that seemed to exclude all idea of selfishness, he yet scrupled not, in the pride of system, to disturb wantonly the faith of his fellow-men, and, without substituting any equivalent good in its place, to rob the wretched of a hope, which, even if false, would be worth all this world's best truths.

Upon no point were the opposite tendencies of the two friends,—to long established opinions and matter of fact on one side, and to all that was most innovating

and visionary on the other,—more observable than in their notions on philosophical subjects; Lord Byron being, with the great bulk of mankind, a believer in the existence of Matter and Evil, while Shelley so far refined upon the theory of Berkeley as not only to resolve the whole of Creation into spirit, but to add also to this immaterial system some pervading principle, some abstract non-entity of Love and Beauty, of which—as a substitute, at least, for Deity—the philosophic bishop had never dreamed. On such subjects, and on poetry, their conversation generally turned; and, as might be expected, from Lord Byron's facility in receiving new impressions, the opinions of his companion were not altogether without some influence on his mind. Here and there, among those fine bursts of passion and description that abound in the Third Canto of Childe Harold, may be discovered traces of that mysticism of meaning,—that sublimity, losing itself in its own vagueness,—which so much characterized the writings of his extraordinary friend; and in one of the notes we find Shelley's favourite Pantheism of Love thus glanced at:—‘ But this is not all: ‘ the feeling with which all around Clarens and the ‘ opposite rocks of Meillerie is invested, is of a still ‘ higher and more comprehensive order than the mere ‘ sympathy with individual passion; it is a sense of ‘ the existence of love in its most extended and sublime ‘ capacity, and of our own participation of its good and ‘ of its glory: it is the great principle of the universe, ‘ which is there more condensed, but not less manifested; and of which, though knowing ourselves a ‘ part, we lose our individuality, and mingle in the ‘ beauty of the whole.’

Another proof of the ductility with which he fell into,

his new friend's tastes and predilections, appears in the tinge, if not something deeper, of the manner and cast of thinking of Mr. Wordsworth, which is traceable through so many of his most beautiful stanzas. Being naturally, from his love of the abstract and imaginative, an admirer of the great poet of the Lakes, Mr. Shelley omitted no opportunity of bringing the beauties of his favourite writer under the notice of Lord Byron; and it is not surprising that, once persuaded into a fair perusal, the mind of the noble poet should—in spite of some personal and political prejudices which unluckily survived this short access of admiration—not only feel the influence but, in some degree, even reflect the hues of one of the very few real and original poets that this age (fertile as it is in rhymers *quales ego et Cluvienus*) has had the glory of producing.

When Polidori was of their party (which, till he found attractions elsewhere, was generally the case), their more elevated subjects of conversation were almost always put to flight by the strange sallies of this eccentric young man, whose vanity made him a constant butt for Lord Byron's sarcasm and merriment. The son of a highly respectable Italian gentleman, who was in early life, I understand, the secretary of Alfieri, Polidori seems to have possessed both talents and dispositions which, had he lived, might have rendered him a useful member of his profession and of society. At the time, however, of which we are speaking, his ambition of distinction far outwent both his powers and opportunities of attaining it. His mind, accordingly, between ardour and weakness, was kept in a constant hectic of vanity, and he seems to have alternately provoked and amused his noble employer, leaving him seldom any escape from anger but in

laughter. Among other pretensions, he had set his heart upon shining as an author, and one evening at Mr. Shelley's, producing a tragedy of his own writing, insisted that they should undergo the operation of hearing it. To lighten the infliction, Lord Byron took upon himself the task of reader; and the whole scene, from the description I have heard of it, must have been not a little trying to gravity. In spite of the jealous watch kept upon every countenance by the author, it was impossible to withstand the smile lurking in the eye of the reader, whose only resource against the outbreak of his own laughter lay in lauding, from time to time, most vehemently, the sublimity of the verses;—particularly some that began ‘ ’Tis thus the goîter’d idiot of the Alps’—and then adding, at the close of every such eulogy, ‘ I assure you when ‘ I was in the Drury-lane Committee, much worse ‘ things were offered to us.’

After passing a fortnight under the same roof with Lord Byron at Sécheron, Mr. and Mrs. Shelley removed to a small house on the Mont-Blanc side of the Lake, within about ten minutes’ walk of the villa which their noble friend had taken, upon the high banks, called Belle Rive, that rose immediately behind them. During the fortnight that Lord Byron outstaid them at Sécheron, though the weather had changed and was become windy and cloudy, he every evening crossed the Lake, with Polidori, to visit them; and ‘ as he returned again ‘ (says my informant) over the darkened waters, the ‘ wind, from far across, bore us his voice singing your ‘ Tyrolese Song of Liberty, which I then first heard, ‘ and which is to me inextricably linked with his re- ‘ membrance.’

In the meantime, Polidori had become jealous of the

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growing intimacy of his noble patron with Shelley; and the plan which he now understood them to have formed of making a tour of the Lake without him completed his mortification. In the soreness of his feelings on this subject he indulged in some intemperate remonstrances, which Lord Byron indignantly resented; and the usual bounds of courtesy being passed on both sides, the dismissal of Polidori appeared, even to himself, inevitable. With this prospect, which he considered nothing less than ruin, before his eyes, the poor young man was, it seems, on the point of committing that fatal act which, two or three years afterwards, he actually did perpetrate. Retiring to his own room, he had already drawn forth the poison from his medicine chest, and was pausing to consider whether he should write a letter before he took it, when Lord Byron (without, however, the least suspicion of his intention) tapped at the door and entered, with his hand held forth in sign of reconciliation. The sudden revulsion was too much for poor Polidori, who burst into tears; and, in relating all the circumstances of the occurrence afterwards, he declared that nothing could exceed the gentle kindness of Lord Byron in soothing his mind and restoring him to composure.

Soon after this the noble poet removed to Diodati. He had, on his first coming to Geneva, with the good-natured view of introducing Polidori into company, gone to several Genevese parties; but, this task performed, he retired altogether from society till late in the summer, when, as we have seen, he visited Copet. His means were at this time very limited, and though he lived by no means parsimoniously, all unnecessary expenses were avoided in his establishment. The young physician had been, at first, a source of much

expense to him, being in the habit of hiring a carriage, at a louis a day (Lord Byron not then keeping horses) to take him to his evening parties; and it was some time before his noble patron had the courage to put this luxury down.

The liberty, indeed, which this young person allowed himself was, on one occasion, the means of bringing an imputation upon the poet's hospitality and good-breeding, which, like everything else, true or false, tending to cast a shade upon his character, was for some time circulated with the most industrious zeal. Without any authority from the noble owner of the mansion, he took upon himself to invite some Genevese gentlemen (M. Pictet, and, I believe, M. Bonstetten) to dine at Diodati; and the punishment which Lord Byron thought it right to inflict upon him for such freedom was, 'as he had invited the guests, to leave him also 'to entertain them.' This step, though merely a consequence of the physician's indiscretion, it was not difficult, of course, to convert into a serious charge of caprice and rudeness against the host himself.

By such repeated instances of thoughtlessness (to use no harsher term), it is not wonderful that Lord Byron should at last be driven into a feeling of distaste towards his medical companion, of whom he one day remarked, that 'he was exactly the kind of person to 'whom, if he fell overboard, one would hold out a 'straw, to know if the adage be true that drowning 'men catch at straws.'

A few more anecdotes of this young man, while in the service of Lord Byron, may, as throwing light upon the character of the latter, be not inappropriately introduced. While the whole party were, one day, out boating, Polidori, by some accident, in rowing, struck

Lord Byron violently on the knee-pan with his oar; and the latter, without speaking, turned his face away to hide the pain: After a moment he said, 'Be so kind, Polidori, another time; to take more care, for you hurt me very much.' 'I am glad of it,' answered the other, 'I am glad to see you can suffer pain.' In a calm suppressed tone, Lord Byron replied, 'Let me advise you, Polidori, when you, another time, hurt any one, not to express your satisfaction. People don't like to be told that those who give them pain are glad of it; and they cannot always command their anger. It was with some difficulty that I refrained from throwing you into the water; and, but for Mrs. Shelley's presence, I should probably have done some such rash thing.' This was said without ill-temper, and the cloud soon passed away.

Another time, when the lady just mentioned was, after a shower of rain, walking up the hill to Diodati, Lord Byron, who saw her from his balcony where he was standing with Polidori, said to the latter, 'Now, you who wish to be gallant ought to jump down this small height, and offer your arm.' Polidori chose the easiest part of the declivity, and leaped;—but, the ground being wet, his foot slipped, and he sprained his anele*. Lord Byron instantly helped to carry him in and procure cold water for the foot; and, after he was laid on the sofa, perceiving that he was uneasy, went up stairs himself (an exertion which his lameness made painful and disagreeable) to fetch a pillow for him. 'Well, I did not believe you had so much feeling,' was Polidori's gracious remark, which, it may be supposed, not a little clouded the noble poet's brow.

* To this lameness of Polidori, one of the preceding letters of Lord Byron alludes.

A dialogue which Lord Byron himself used to mention as having taken place between them during their journey on the Rhine, is amusingly characteristic of both the persons concerned. ‘After all,’ said the physician, ‘what is there you can do that I cannot?’—‘Why, since you force me to say,’ answered the other, ‘I think there are three things I can do which you cannot.’ Polidori defied him to name them. ‘I can,’ said Lord Byron, ‘swim across that river—I can snuff out that candle with a pistol-shot at the distance of twenty paces—and I have written a poem * of which 14,000 copies were sold in one day.’

The jealous pique of the doctor against Shelley was constantly breaking out, and on the occasion of some victory which the latter had gained over him in a sailing-match, he took it into his head that his antagonist had treated him with contempt; and went so far, in consequence, notwithstanding Shelley’s known sentiments against duelling, as to proffer him a sort of challenge, at which Shelley, as might be expected, only laughed. Lord Byron, however, fearing that the vivacious physician might still further take advantage of this peculiarity of his friend, said to him, ‘Recollect, that though Shelley has some scruples about duelling, I have none; and shall be, at all times, ready to take his place.’

At Diodati, his life was passed in the same regular round of habits and occupations into which, when left to himself, he always naturally fell; a late breakfast, then a visit to the Shelleys’ cottage and an excursion on the Lake;—at five, dinner † (when he usually pre-

* The Corsair.

† His system of diet here was regulated by an abstinence almost incredible. A thin slice of bread, with tea, at breakfast—a light, vegetable dinner, with a bottle or two of Seltzer water, tinged with vin de

ferred being alone), and then, if the weather permitted, an excursion again. He and Shelley had joined in purchasing a boat, for which they gave twenty-five *louis*,—a small sailing vessel, fitted to stand the usual squalls of the climate, and, at that time, the only keeled boat on the Lake. When the weather did not allow of their excursions after dinner,—an occurrence not unfrequent during this very wet summer,—the inmates of the cottage passed their evenings at Diodati, and, when the rain rendered it inconvenient for them to return home, remained there to sleep. ‘We often,’ says one, who was not the least ornamental of the party, ‘sat up in conversation till the morning light. ‘There was never any lack of subjects, and, grave or ‘gay, we were always interested.’

During a week of rain at this time, having amused themselves with reading German ghost-stories, they agreed, at last, to write something in imitation of them. ‘You and I,’ said Lord Byron to Mrs. Shelley, ‘will ‘publish ours together.’ He then began his tale of the Vampire; and, having the whole arranged in his head, repeated to them a sketch of the story* one evening,—but, from the narrative being in prose, made but little progress in filling up his outline. The most memorable result, indeed, of their story-telling compact, was Mrs. Shelley’s wild and powerful romance of *Frankenstein*,—one of those original conceptions

Grave, and in the evening, a cup of green tea, without milk or sugar, formed the whole of his sustenance. The pangs of hunger he appeased by privately chewing tobacco and smoking cigars.

* From his remembrance of this sketch, Polidori afterwards vamped up his strange novel of the Vampire, which, under the supposition of its being Lord Byron’s, was received with such enthusiasm in France. It would, indeed, not a little deduct from our value of foreign fame, if what some French writers have asserted be true, that the appearance of this extravagant novel among our neighbours first attracted their attention to the genius of Byron.

that take hold of the public mind at once, and for ever.

Towards the latter end of June, as we have seen in one of the preceding letters, Lord Byron, accompanied by his friend Shelley, made a tour in his boat round the Lake, and visited, 'with the Heloise before him,' all those scenes around Meillerie and Clarens, which have become consecrated for ever by ideal passion, and by that power which Genius alone possesses, of giving such life to its dreams as to make them seem realities. In the squall off Meillerie, which he mentions, their danger was considerable*. In the expectation, every moment, of being obliged to swim for his life, Lord Byron had already thrown off his coat, and, as Shelley was no swimmer, insisted upon endeavouring, by some means, to save him. This offer, however, Shelley positively refused; and seating himself quietly upon a locker, and grasping the rings at each end firmly in his hands, declared his determination to go down in that position, without a struggle†.

* 'The wind (says Lord Byron's fellow-voyager) gradually increased in violence until it blew tremendously; and, as it came from the remotest extremity of the Lake, produced waves of a frightful height, and covered the whole surface with a chaos of foam. One of our boatmen, who was a dreadfully stupid fellow, persisted in holding the sail at a time when the boat was on the point of being driven under water by the hurricane. On discovering this error, he let it entirely go, and the boat for a moment refused to obey the helm; in addition, the rudder was so broken as to render the management of it very difficult; one wave fell in and then another.'

† 'I felt, in this near prospect of death (says Mr. Shelley), a mixture of sensations, among which terror entered, though but subordinately. My feelings would have been less painful had I been alone; but I knew that my companion would have attempted to save me, and I was overcome with humiliation, when I thought that his life might have been risked to preserve mine. When we arrived at St. Gingoux, the inhabitants, who stood on the shore, unaccustomed to see a vessel as frail as ours, and fearing to venture at all on such a sea, exchanged looks of wonder and congratulation with our boatmen, who, as well as ourselves, were well pleased to set foot on shore.'

Subjoined to that interesting little work, the 'Six Weeks' Tour,' there is a letter by Shelley himself, giving an account of this excursion round the Lake, and written with all the enthusiasm such scenes should inspire. In describing a beautiful child they saw at the village of Nerni, he says, 'My companion gave him a piece of money, which he took without speaking, with a sweet smile of easy thankfulness, and then with an unembarrassed air turned to his play.' There were, indeed, few things Lord Byron more delighted in than to watch beautiful children at play;—'many a lovely Swiss child (says a person who saw him daily at this time) received crowns from him as the reward of their grace and sweetness.'

Speaking of their lodgings at Nerni, which were gloomy and dirty, Mr. Shelley says, 'On returning to our inn, we found that the servant had arranged our rooms, and deprived them of the greater portion of their former disconsolate appearance. They reminded my companion of Greece:—it was five years, he said, since he had slept in such beds.'

Luckily for Shelley's full enjoyment of these scenes, he had never before happened to read the *Heloise*; and though his companion had long been familiar with that romance, the sight of the region itself, the 'birth-place of deep Love,' every spot of which seemed instinct with the passion of the story, gave to the whole a fresh and actual existence in his mind. Both were under the spell of the Genius of the place,—both full of emotion; and as they walked silently through the vineyards that were once the 'bosquet de Julie,' Lord Byron suddenly exclaimed, 'Thank God, Polidori is not here.'

That the glowing stanzas suggested to him by this

scene were written upon the spot itself appears almost certain, from the letter addressed to Mr. Murray on his way back to Diodati, in which he announces the Third Canto as complete, and consisting of 117 stanzas. At Ouchy, near Lausanne,—the place from which that letter is dated,—he and his friend were detained two days, in a small inn, by the weather: and it was there, in that short interval, that he wrote his ‘Prisoner of Chillon,’ adding one more deathless association to the already immortalized localities of the Lake.

On his return from this excursion to Diodati, an occasion was afforded for the gratification of his jesting propensities by the avowal of the young physician that—he had fallen in love. On the evening of this tender confession they both appeared at Shelley’s cottage—Lord Byron, in the highest and most boyish spirits, rubbing his hands as he walked about the room, and in that utter incapacity of retention which was one of his foibles, making jesting allusions to the secret he had just heard. The brow of the doctor darkened as this pleasantry went on, and, at last, he angrily accused Lord Byron of hardness of heart. ‘I never,’ said he, ‘met with a person so unfeeling.’ This sally, though the poet had evidently brought it upon himself, annoyed him most deeply. ‘Call *me* cold-hearted—*me* insensible!’ he exclaimed, with manifest emotion—‘as well might you say that glass is not brittle, which has been cast down a precipice, and lies dashed to pieces at the foot!’

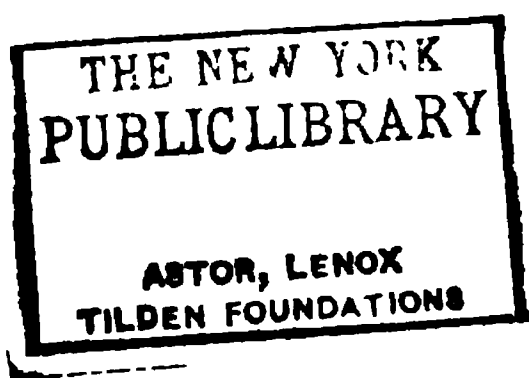
In the month of July he paid a visit to Copet, and was received by the distinguished hostess with a cordiality the more sensibly felt by him as, from his personal unpopularity at this time, he had hardly ventured

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to count upon it*. In her usual frank style, she took him to task upon his matrimonial conduct—but in a way that won upon his mind, and disposed him to yield to her suggestions. He must endeavour, she told him, to bring about a reconciliation with his wife, and must submit to contend no longer with the opinion of the world. In vain did he quote her own motto to Delphine, ‘Un homme peut braver, une femme doit se succomber aux opinions du monde ;’—her reply was, that all this might be very well to say, but that, in real life, the duty and necessity of yielding belonged also to the man. Her eloquence, in short, so far succeeded, that he was prevailed upon to write a letter to a friend in England, declaring himself still willing to be reconciled to Lady Byron,—a concession not a little startling to those who had so often, lately, heard him declare that, ‘having done all in his power to persuade Lady Byron to return, and with this view put off as long as he could signing the deed of separation, that step being once taken, they were now divided for ever.’

Of the particulars of this brief negotiation that ensued upon Madame de Staël’s suggestion, I have no very accurate remembrance ; but there can be little doubt that its failure, after the violence he had done his own pride in the overture, was what first infused any mixture of resentment or bitterness into the feel-

* In the account of this visit to Copet in his Memoranda, he spoke in high terms of the daughter of his hostess, the present Duchess de Broglie, and, in noticing how much she appeared to be attached to her husband, remarked that ‘Nothing was more pleasing than to see the development of the domestic affections in a very young woman.’ Of Madame de Staël, in that Memoir, he spoke thus: ‘Madame de Staël was a good woman at heart and the cleverest at bottom, but spoilt by a wish to be —she knew not what. In her own house she was amiable ; in any other person’s, you wished her gone, and in her own again.’

ings hitherto entertained by him throughout these painful differences. He had, indeed, since his arrival in Geneva, invariably spoken of his lady with kindness and regret, imputing the course she had taken, in leaving him, not to herself but others, and assigning whatever little share of blame he would allow her to bear in the transaction to the simple and, doubtless, true cause—her not at all understanding him. ‘I have no doubt,’ he would sometimes say, ‘that she really did believe me to be mad.’

Another resolution connected with his matrimonial affairs, in which he often, at this time, professed his fixed intention to persevere, was that of never allowing himself to touch any part of his wife’s fortune. Such a sacrifice, there is no doubt, would have been, in his situation, delicate and manly: but though the natural bent of his disposition led him to *make* the resolution, he wanted,—what few, perhaps, could have attained, the fortitude to *keep* it.

The effects of the late struggle on his mind, in stirring up all its resources and energies, was visible in the great activity of his genius during the whole of this period, and the rich variety, both in character and colouring, of the works with which it teemed. Besides the Third Canto of Childe Harold and the Prisoner of Chillon, he produced also his two Poems, ‘Darkness’ and ‘the Dream,’ the latter of which cost him many a tear in writing,—being, indeed, the most mournful, as well as picturesque ‘story of a wandering life’ that ever came from the pen and heart of man. Those verses, too, entitled ‘the Incantation,’ which he introduced afterwards, without any connexion with the subject, into Manfred, were also (at least, the less bitter portion of them) the production of this period; and as they

were written soon after the last fruitless attempt at reconciliation, it is needless to say who was in his thoughts while he penned some of the opening stanzas.

‘ Though thy slumber must be deep,
‘ Yet thy spirit shall not sleep;
‘ There are shades which will not vanish,
‘ There are thoughts thou canst not banish;
‘ By a power to thee unknown,
‘ Thou canst never be alone;
‘ Thou art wrapt as with a shroud,
‘ Thou art gather’d in a cloud;
‘ And for ever shalt thou dwell
‘ In the spirit of this spell

‘ Though thou see’st me not pass by,
‘ Thou shalt feel me with thine eye,
‘ As a thing that, though unseen,
‘ Must be near thee, and hath been;
‘ And when, in that secret dread,
‘ Thou hast turn’d around thy head,
‘ Thou shalt marvel I am not
‘ As thy shadow on the spot,¹
‘ And the power which thou dost feel
‘ Shall be what thou must conceal.’

Besides the unfinished ‘ Vampire,’ he began also, at this time, another romance in prose, founded upon the story of the Marriage of Belphegor, and intended to shadow out his own matrimonial fate. The wife of this satanic personage he described much in the same spirit that pervades his delineation of Donna Ines in the First Canto of Don Juan. While engaged, however, in writing this story, he heard from England that Lady Byron was ill, and, his heart softening at the intelligence, he threw the manuscript into the fire. So constantly were the good and evil principles of his nature conflicting for mastery over him*,

The two following Poems, so different from each other in their character,—the first prying with an

* Upon the same occasion, indeed, he wrote some verses in a spirit

awful scepticism into the darkness of another world, and the second breathing all that is most natural and tender in the affections of this,—were also written at this time, and have never before been published.

‘EXTRACT FROM AN UNPUBLISHED POEM.

- ‘ Could I remount the river of my years
- ‘ To the first fountain of our smiles and tears,
- ‘ I would not trace again the stream of hours
- ‘ Between their outworn banks of wither’d flowers,
- ‘ But bid it flow as now—until it glides
- ‘ Into the number of the nameless tides. * * *
- ‘ What is this Death?—a quiet of the heart?
- ‘ The whole of that of which we are a part?
- ‘ For Life is but a vision—what I see
- ‘ Of all which lives alone is life to me,
- ‘ And being so—the absent are the dead,
- ‘ Who haunt us from tranquillity, and spread
- ‘ A dreary shroud around us, and invest
- ‘ With sad remembrances our hours of rest.
- ‘ The absent are the dead—for they are cold,
- ‘ And ne’er can be what once we did behold;
- ‘ And they are changed, and cheerless,—or if yet
- ‘ The unforgotten do not all forget,
- ‘ Since thus divided—equal must it be
- ‘ If the deep barrier be of earth, or sea;
- ‘ It may be both—but one day end it must
- ‘ In the dark union of insensate dust.
- ‘ The under-earth inhabitants—are they
- ‘ But mingled millions decomposed to clay?
- ‘ The ashes of a thousand ages spread
- ‘ Wherever man has trodden or shall tread?
- ‘ Or do they in their silent cities dwell
- ‘ Each in his incommunicative cell?
- ‘ Or have they their own language? and a sense
- ‘ Of breathless being?—darken’d and intense

not quite so generous, of which a few of the opening lines is all I shall give:—

- ‘ And thou wert sad—yet I was not with thee!
- ‘ And thou wert sick—and yet I was not near.
- ‘ Methought that Joy and Health alone could be
- ‘ Where I was *not*, and pain and sorrow here.
- ‘ And is it thus?—it is as I foretold,
- ‘ And shall be more so:—’ &c. &c.

' As midnight in her solitude?—Oh Earth!
 ' Where are the past?—and wherefore had they birth?
 ' The dead are thy inheritors—and we
 ' But bubbles on thy surface; and the key
 ' Of thy profundity is in the grave,
 ' The ebon portal of thy peopled cave,
 ' Where I would walk in spirit, and behold
 ' Our elements resolved to things untold,
 ' And fathom hidden wonders, and explore
 ' The essence of great bosoms now no more.' * *

‘ TO AUGUSTA.

' My sister! my sweet sister! if a name
 ' Dearer and purer were, it should be thine.
 ' Mountains and seas divide us, but I claim
 ' No tears, but tenderness to answer mine:
 ' Go where I will, to me thou art the same—
 ' A loved regret which I would not resign.
 ' There yet are two things in my destiny,—
 ' A world to roam through, and a home with thee.
 ' The first were nothing—had I still the last,
 ' It were the haven of my happiness;
 ' But other claims and other ties thou hast,
 ' And mine is not the wish to make them less.
 ' A strange doom is thy father's son's, and past
 ' Recalling, as it lies beyond redress;
 ' Reversed for him our grandsire's* fate of yore,—
 ' He had no rest at sea, nor I on shore.
 ' If my inheritance of storms hath been
 ' In other elements, and on the rocks
 ' Of perils, overlook'd or unforeseen,
 ' I have sustain'd my share of worldly shocks,
 ' The fault was mine; nor do I seek to screen
 ' My errors with defensive paradox;
 ' I have been cunning in mine overthrow,
 ' The careful pilot of my proper woe.

* ' Admiral Byron was remarkable for never making a voyage with-
 ' out a tempest. He was known to the sailors by the facetious name of
 ' "Foul-weather Jack."

' But, though it were tempest-tost,
 ' Still his bark could not be lost.
 ' He returned safely from the wreck of the Wager (in Anson's Voyage),
 ' and subsequently circumnavigated the world, many years after, as com-
 ' mander of a similar expedition.'

- ‘ Mine were my faults, and mine be their reward.
‘ My whole life was a contest, since the day
‘ That gave me being, gave me that which marr’d
‘ The gift,—a fate, or will that walk’d astray;
‘ And I at times have found the struggle hard,
‘ And thought of shaking off my bonds of clay:
‘ But now I fain would for a time survive,
‘ If but to see what next can well arrive.
- ‘ Kingdoms and empires in my little day
‘ I have outlived, and yet I am not old;
‘ And when I look on this, the petty spray
‘ Of my own years of trouble, which have roll’d
‘ Like a wild bay of breakers, melts away:
‘ Something—I know not what—does still uphold
‘ A spirit of slight patience;—not in vain,
‘ Even for its own sake, do we purchase pain.
- ‘ Perhaps the workings of defiance stir
‘ Within me,—or perhaps a cold despair,
‘ Brought on when ills habitually recur,—
‘ Perhaps a kinder clime, or purer air,
‘ (For even to this may change of soul refer,
‘ And with light armour we may learn to bear,)
‘ Have taught me a strange quiet, which was not
‘ The chief companion of a calmer lot.
- ‘ I feel almost at times as I have felt
‘ In happy childhood; trees, and flowers, and brooks,
‘ Which do remember me of where I dwelt
‘ Ere my young mind was sacrificed to books,
‘ Come as of yore upon me, and can melt
‘ My heart with recognition of their looks;
‘ And even at moments I could think I see
‘ Some living thing to love—but none like thee.
- ‘ Here are the Alpine landscapes which create
‘ A fund for contemplation;—to admire
‘ Is a brief feeling of a trivial date;
‘ But something worthier do such scenes inspire:
‘ Here to be lonely is not desolate,
‘ For much I view which I could most desire,
‘ And, above all, a lake I can behold
‘ Lovelier, not dearer, than our own of old.
- ‘ Oh that thou wert but with me!—but I grow
‘ The fool of my own wishes, and forget
‘ The solitude which I have vaunted so
‘ Has lost its praise in this but one regret;

‘ There may be others which I less may show ;—
‘ I am not of the plaintive mood, and yet
‘ I feel an ebb in my philosophy,
‘ And the tide rising in my alter’d eye.

‘ I did remind thee of our own dear lake*,
‘ By the old hall which may be mine no more.
‘ Leman’s is fair ; but think not I forsake
‘ The sweet remembrance of a dearer shore :
‘ Sad havoc Time must with my memory make
‘ Ere *that* or *thou* can fade these eyes before ;
‘ Though, like all things which I have loved, they are
‘ Resign’d for ever, or divided far.

‘ The world is all before me ; I but ask
‘ Of nature that with which she will comply—
‘ It is but in her summer’s sun to bask,
‘ To mingle with the quiet of her sky,
‘ To see her gentle face without a mask,
‘ And never gaze on it with apathy.
‘ She was my early friend, and now shall be
‘ My sister—till I look again on thee.

‘ I can reduce all feelings but this one ;
‘ And that I would not ;—for at length I see
‘ Such scenes as those wherein my life begun.
‘ The earliest—even the only paths for me—
‘ Had I but sooner learnt the crowd to shun,
‘ I had been better than I now can be ;
‘ The passions which have torn me would have slept ;
‘ I had not suffer’d, and *thou* hadst not wept.

‘ With false ambition what had I to do ?
‘ Little with love, and least of all with fame ;
‘ And yet they came unsought, and with me grew,
‘ And made me all which they can make—a name.
‘ Yet this was not the end I did pursue ;
‘ Surely I once beheld a nobler aim.
‘ But all is over—I am one the more
‘ To baffled millions which have gone before.

‘ And for the future, this world’s future may
‘ From me demand but little of my care ;
‘ I have outlived myself by many a day ;
‘ Having survived so many things that were ;

* The lake of Newstead Abbey.

- ‘ My years have been no slumber, but the prey
- ‘ Of ceaseless vigils; for I had the share
- ‘ Of life which might have fill’d a century,
- ‘ Before its fourth in time had pass’d me by.

- ‘ And for the remnant which may be to come
- ‘ I am content; and for the past I feel
- ‘ Not thankless,—for within the crowded sum
- ‘ Of struggles, happiness at times would steal,
- ‘ And for the present, I would not benumb
- ‘ My feelings farther.—Nor shall I conceal
- ‘ That with all this I still can look around
- ‘ And worship Nature with a thought profound.

- ‘ For thee, my own sweet sister, in thy heart
- ‘ I know myself secure, as thou in mine:
- ‘ We were and are—I am, even as thou art—
- ‘ Beings who ne’er each other can resign;
- ‘ It is the same, together or apart,
- ‘ From life’s commencement to its slow decline
- ‘ We are entwined—let death come slow or fast,
- ‘ The tie which bound the first endures the last!’

In the month of August, Mr. M. G. Lewis arrived to pass some time with him; and he was soon after visited by Mr. Richard Sharpe, of whom he makes such honourable mention in the Journal already given, and with whom, as I have heard this gentleman say, it now gave him evident pleasure to converse about their common friends in England. Among those who appeared to have left the strongest impressions of interest and admiration on his mind was (as easily will be believed by all who know this distinguished person) Sir James Mackintosh.

Soon after the arrival of his friends, Mr. Hobhouse and Mr. S. Davies, he set out, as we have seen, with the former on a tour through the Bernese Alps,—after accomplishing which journey, about the beginning of October he took his departure, accompanied by the same gentleman, for Italy.

The first letter of the following series was, it will be seen, written a few days before he left Diodati.

LETTER 247.

TO MR. MURRAY.

Diodati, Oct. 5th, 1816.

‘ Save me a copy of “ Buck’s Richard III.” repub-
‘ lished by Longman; but do not send out more books,
‘ I have too many.

‘ The “ Monody ” is in too many paragraphs, which
‘ makes it unintelligible to me; if any one else under-
‘ stands it in the present form, they are wiser; how-
‘ ever, as it cannot be rectified till my return, and has
‘ been already published, even publish it on in the
‘ collection—it will fill up the place of the omitted
‘ epistle.

‘ Strike out “ by request of a friend,” which is sad
‘ trash, and must have been done to make it ridicu-
‘ lous.

‘ Be careful in the printing the stanzas beginning,

‘ “ Though the day of my destiny, &c.”

which I think well of as a composition.

‘ “ The Antiquary ” is not the best of the three, but
‘ much above all the last twenty years, saving its elder
‘ brothers. Holcroft’s Memoirs are valuable as show-
‘ ing strength of endurance in the man, which is worth
‘ more than all the talent in the world.

‘ And so you have been publishing “ Margaret of
‘ Anjou ” and an Assyrian tale, and refusing W. W.’s
‘ Waterloo, and the “ Hue and Cry.” I know not
‘ which most to admire, your rejections or acceptances.
‘ I believe that *prose* is, after all, the most reputable,
‘ for certes, if one could foresee—but I won’t go on—
‘ that is, with this sentence; but poetry is, I fear, in-

‘ curable. God help me! if I proceed in this scrib-
‘ bling, I shall have frittered away my mind before I
‘ am thirty, but it is at times a real relief to me. For
‘ the present—good evening.”

LETTER 248.

TO MR. MURRAY.

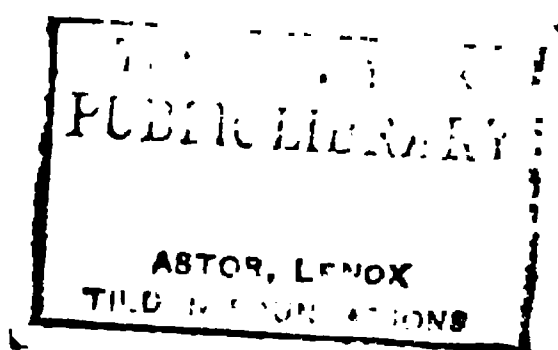
‘ *Martigny, October 9th, 1816.*

‘ Thus far on my way to Italy. We have just passed
‘ the “Pisse-Vache” (one of the first torrents in Switz-
‘ erland) in time to view the iris which the sun flings
‘ along it before noon.

‘ I have written to you twice lately. Mr. Davies, I
‘ hear, is arrived. He brings the original MS. which
‘ you wished to see. Recollect that the printing is to
‘ be from that which Mr. Shelley brought; and recol-
‘ lect, also, that the concluding stanzas of Childe
‘ Harold (those to my *daughter*) which I had not made
‘ up my mind whether to publish or not when they
‘ were *first* written (as you will see marked on the
‘ margin of the first copy), I had (and have) fully de-
‘ termined to publish with the rest of the Canto, as in
‘ the copy which you received by Mr. Shelley, before
‘ I sent it to England.

‘ Our weather is very fine, which is more than the
‘ summer has been.—At Milan I shall expect to hear
‘ from you. Address either to Milan, *poste restante*,
‘ or by way of Geneva, to the care of Monsr. Hentsch,
‘ Banquier. I write these few lines in case my other
‘ letter should not reach you; I trust one of them
‘ will.

‘ P. S. My best respects and regards to Mr. Gifford.
‘ Will you tell him it may perhaps be as well to put a
‘ short note to that part relating to *Clarens*, merely to



Continued by H. J. H. H. H.

Continued by H. J. H. H. H.

Continued by H. J. H. H. H.

‘ say, that of course the description does not refer to
‘ that particular spot so much as to the command of
‘ scenery round it? I do not know that this is neces-
‘ sary, and leave it to Mr. G.’s choice, as my editor,—
‘ if he will allow me to call him so at this distance.’

LETTER 249.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ Milan, October 15th, 1816.

‘ I hear that Mr. Davies has arrived in England,—
‘ but that of some letters, &c., committed to his care
‘ by Mr. H., only *half* have been delivered. This in-
‘ telligence naturally makes me feel a little anxious for
‘ mine, and amongst them for the MS., which I wished
‘ to have compared with the one sent by me through
‘ the hands of Mr. Shelley. I trust that *it* has arrived
‘ safely,—and indeed not less so, that some little crys-
‘ tals, &c., from Mont Blanc, for my daughter and my
‘ nieces, have reached their address. Pray have the
‘ goodness to ascertain from Mr. Davies that no acci-
‘ dent (by customhouse or loss) has befallen them,
‘ and satisfy me on this point at your earliest conveni-
‘ ence.

‘ If I recollect rightly, you told me that Mr. Gif-
‘ ford had kindly undertaken to correct the press (at
‘ my request) during my absence—at least I hope
‘ so. It will add to my many obligations to that gen-
‘ tleman.

‘ I wrote to you, on my way here, a short note, dated
‘ Martigny. Mr. Hobhouse and myself arrived here
‘ a few days ago, by the Simplon and Lago Maggiore
‘ route. Of course we visited the Borromean Islands,
‘ which are fine, but too artificial. The Simplon is
‘ magnificent in its nature and its art,—both God and
‘ man have done wonders,—to say nothing of the devil

‘ who must certainly have had a hand (or a hoof) in
‘ some of the rocks and ravines through and over which
‘ the works are carried.

‘ Milan is striking—the cathedral superb. The
‘ city altogether reminds me of Seville, but a little
‘ inferior. We had heard divers bruits, and took pre-
‘ cautions on the road, near the frontier, against some
‘ “many worthy fellows (*i. e.* felons) that were out,”
‘ and had ransacked some preceding travellers, a few
‘ weeks ago, near Sesto,—or Cesto, I forget which,—
‘ of cash and raiment, besides putting them in bodily
‘ fear, and lodging about twenty slugs in the retreating
‘ part of a courier belonging to Mr. Hope. But we
‘ were not molested, and I do not think in any dan-
‘ ger, except of making mistakes in the way of cocking
‘ and priming whenever we saw an old house, or an
‘ ill looking thicket, and now and then suspecting the
‘ “true men,” who have very much the appearance of
‘ the thieves of other countries. What the thieves
‘ may look like, I know not, nor desire to know, for it
‘ seems they come upon you in bodies of thirty (“in
‘ buckram and Kendal green”) at a time, so that voy-
‘ agers have no great chance. It is something like
‘ poor dear Turkey in that respect, but not so good, for
‘ there you can have as great a body of rogues to
‘ match the regular banditti; but here the gens
‘ d’armes are said to be no great things, and as for
‘ one’s own people, one can’t carry them about like
‘ Robinson Crusoe with a gun on each shoulder.

‘ I have been to the Ambrosian library—it is a fine
‘ collection—full of MSS. edited and unedited. I
‘ enclose you a list of the former recently published:
‘ these are matters for your literati. For me, in my
‘ simple way, I have been most delighted with a cor-

‘ response of letters, all original and amatory, be-
‘ tween *Lucretia Borgia* and *Cardinal Bembo*, preserved
‘ there. I have pored over them and a lock of her
‘ hair, the prettiest and fairest imaginable—I never
‘ saw fairer—and shall go repeatedly to read the epis-
‘ tles over and over; and if I can obtain some of the
‘ hair by fair means, I shall try. I have already per-
‘ suaded the librarian to promise me copies of the let-
‘ ters, and I hope he will not disappoint me. They
‘ are short, but very simple, sweet, and to the pur-
‘ pose; there are some copies of verses in Spanish also
‘ by her; the tress of her hair is long, and, as I said
‘ before, beautiful. The Brera gallery of paintings
‘ has some fine pictures, but nothing of a collection.
‘ Of painting I know nothing; but I like a Guercino
‘ —a picture of Abraham putting away Hagar and
‘ Ishmael—which seems to me natural and goodly.
‘ The Flemish school, such as I saw it in Flanders, I
‘ utterly detested, despised, and abhorred; it might be
‘ painting, but it was not nature; the Italian is pleasing,
‘ and their *ideal* very noble.

‘ The Italians I have encountered here are very
‘ intelligent and agreeable. In a few days I am to
‘ meet Monti. By the way, I have just heard an
‘ anecdote of Deccaria, who published such admirable
‘ things against the punishment of death. As soon as
‘ his book was out, his servant (having read it, I pre-
‘ sume) stole his watch; and his master, while correct-
‘ ing the press of a second edition, did all he could to
‘ have him hanged by way of advertisement.

‘ I forgot to mention the triumphal arch begun by
‘ Napoleon, as a gate to this city. It is unfinished,
‘ but the part completed worthy of another age and
‘ the same country. The society here is very oddly

‘ carried on,—at the theatre, and the theatre only,—
‘ which answers to our opera. People meet there as
‘ at a rout, but in very small circles. From Milan I
‘ shall go to Venice. If you write, write to Geneva,
‘ as before—the letter will be forwarded.

‘ Yours ever.’

LETTER 250.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Milan, November 1st, 1816.*

‘ I have recently written to you rather frequently,
‘ but without any late answer. Mr. Hobhouse and
‘ myself set out for Venice in a few days ; but you had
‘ better still address to me at Mr. Hentsch’s, Banquier,
‘ Geneva ; he will forward your letters.

‘ I do not know whether I mentioned to you, some
‘ time ago, that I had parted with the Dr. Polidori a
‘ few weeks previous to my leaving Diodati. I know
‘ no great harm of him ; but he had an alacrity of
‘ getting into scrapes, and was too young and heedless ;
‘ and having enough to attend to in my own concerns,
‘ and without time to become his tutor, I thought it
‘ much better to give him his congé. He arrived at
‘ Milan some weeks before Mr. Hobhouse and myself.
‘ About a week ago, in consequence of a quarrel at
‘ the theatre with an Austrian officer, in which he was
‘ exceedingly in the wrong, he has contrived to get
‘ sent out of the territory, and is gone to Florence. I
‘ was not present, the pit having been the scene of
‘ altercation ; but on being sent for from the Cavalier
‘ Breme’s box, where I was quietly staring at the bal-
‘ let, I found the man of medicine begirt with grena-
‘ diers, arrested by the guard, conveyed into the
‘ guard-room, where there was much swearing in
‘ several languages. They were going to keep him

‘ there for the night ; but on my giving my name, and
‘ answering for his apparition next morning, he was
‘ permitted egress. Next day he had an order from
‘ the government to be gone in twenty-four hours, and
‘ accordingly gone he is, some days ago. We did
‘ what we could for him, but to no purpose ; and in-
‘ deed he brought it upon himself, as far as I could
‘ learn, for I was not present at the squabble itself.
‘ I believe this is the real state of his case ; and I tell
‘ it you because I believe things sometimes reach you
‘ in England in a false or exaggerated form. We
‘ found Milan very polite and hospitable*, and have
‘ the same hopes of Verona and Venice. I have filled
‘ my paper.

‘ Ever yours, &c.’

* With Milan, however, or its society the noble traveller was far from being pleased, and in his Memoranda, I recollect, he described his stay there to be 'like a ship under quarantine.' Among other persons whom he met in the society of that place was M. Beyle, the ingenious author of 'L'Histoire de la Peinture en Italie,' who thus describes the impression their first interview left upon him:—

‘ Ce fut pendant l’automne de 1816, que je le rencontrai au théâtre de
‘ la *Scala*, à Milan, dans la loge de M. Louis de Brême. Je fus frappé
‘ des yeux de Lord Byron au moment où il écoutait un sestetto d’un
‘ opéra de Mayer intitulé *Elena*. Je n’ai vu de ma vie, rien de plus
‘ beau ni de plus expressif. Encore aujourd’hui, si je viens à penser à
‘ l’expression qu’un grand peintre devrait donner au génie, cette tête sub-
‘ lime reparaît tout-à-coup devant moi. J’eus un instant d’enthousiasme,
‘ et oubliant la juste répugnance que tout homme un peu fier doit avoir à
‘ se faire présenter à un pair d’Angleterre, je priai M. de Brême de m’in-
‘ troduire à Lord Byron, je me trouvai le lendemain à dîner chez M. de
‘ Brême, avec lui, et le célèbre Monti, l’immortel auteur de la *Basvig-*
‘ *hiana*. On parla poésie, on en vint à demander quels étaient les douze
‘ plus beaux vers faits depuis un siècle, en Français, en Italien, en
‘ Anglais. Les Italiens présens s’accordèrent à désigner les douze pre-
‘ miers vers de la *Mascheroniana* de Monti, comme ce que l’on avait fait
‘ de plus beau dans leur langue, depuis cent ans. *Monti* voulut bien
‘ nous les réciter. Je regardai Lord Byron, il fut ravi. La nuance de
‘ hauteur, ou plutôt l’air d’un homme *qui se trouve avoir à repousser*
‘ *une importunité*, qui déparait un peu sa belle figure, disparut tout-à-
‘ coup pour faire à l’expression du bonheur. Le premier chant de la
‘ *Mascheroniana*, que Monti récita presque en entier, vaincu par les
‘ acclamations des auditeurs, causa la plus vive sensation à l’auteur de
‘ Childe Harold. Je n’oublierai jamais l’expression divine de ses traits ;
‘ c’était l’air serein de la puissance et du génie, et suivant moi, Lord
‘ Byron n’avait, en ce moment, aucune affectation à se reprocher.’

LETTER 251.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *Verona, November 6th, 1816.*

‘ My dear Moore,

‘ Your letter, written before my departure from
‘ England, and addressed to me in London, only reached
‘ me recently. Since that period, I have been over a
‘ portion of that part of Europe which I had not
‘ already seen. About a month since, I crossed the
‘ Alps from Switzerland to Milan, which I left a few
‘ days ago, and am thus far on my way to Venice,
‘ where I shall probably winter. Yesterday I was on
‘ the shores of the Benacus, with his *fluctibus et fre-*
‘ *mitu*. Catullus’s Sirmium has still its name and
‘ site, and is remembered for his sake: but the very
‘ heavy autumnal rains and mists prevented our quit-
‘ ting our route (that is, Hobhouse and myself, who are
‘ at present voyaging together), as it was better not to
‘ see it at all than to a great disadvantage.

‘ I found on the Benacus the same tradition of a
‘ city still visible in calm weather below the waters,
‘ which you have preserved of Lough Neagh, “When
‘ the clear, cold eve’s declining.” I do not know that it
‘ is authorised by records; but they tell you such a
‘ story, and say that the city was swallowed up by an
‘ earthquake. We moved to-day over the frontier to
‘ Verona, by a road suspected of thieves—“the wise
‘ *convey* it call,”—but without molestation. I shall
‘ remain here a day or two to gape at the usual
‘ marvels—amphitheatre, paintings, and all that time-
‘ tax of travel—though Catullus, Claudian, and Shak-
‘ speare have done more for Verona than it ever did
‘ for itself. They still pretend to show, I believe, the
‘ “tomb of all the Capulets”—we shall see.

‘ Among many things at Milan, one pleased me par-

‘ ticularly, viz., the correspondence (in the prettiest
‘ love-letters in the world) of Lucretia Borgia with
‘ Cardinal Bembo (who, *you say*, made a very good
‘ cardinal), and a lock of her hair, and some Spanish
‘ verses of hers,—the lock very fair and beautiful. I
‘ took one single hair of it as a relic, and wished sorely
‘ to get a copy of one or two of the letters; but it is
‘ prohibited: *that* I don’t mind; but it was impracti-
‘ cable; and so I only got some of them by heart.
‘ They are kept in the Ambrosian Library, which I
‘ often visited to look them over—to the scandal of
‘ the librarian, who wanted to enlighten me with
‘ sundry valuable MSS., classical, philosophical, and
‘ pious. But I stick to the Pope’s daughter, and wish
‘ myself a cardinal.

‘ I have seen the finest parts of Switzerland, the
‘ Rhine, the Rhone, and the Swiss and Italian lakes;
‘ for the beauties of which I refer you to the Guide-
‘ book. The north of Italy is tolerably free from the
‘ English; but the south swarms with them, I am told.
‘ Madame de Staël I saw frequently at Copet, which
‘ she renders remarkably pleasant. She has been par-
‘ ticularly kind to me. I was for some months her
‘ neighbour, in a country house called Diodati, which
‘ I had on the Lake of Geneva. My plans are very
‘ uncertain; but it is probable that you will see me
‘ in England in the spring. I have some business
‘ there. If you write to me, will you address to the
‘ care of Mons. Hentsch, Banquier, Geneva, who
‘ receives and forwards my letters. Remember me to
‘ Rogers, who wrote to me lately, with a short account
‘ of your poem, which, I trust, is near the light. He
‘ speaks of it most highly.

‘ My health is very endurable, except that I am

‘ subject to casual giddiness and faintness, which is
‘ so like a fine lady, that I am rather ashamed of the
‘ disorder. When I sailed, I had a physician with
‘ me, whom, after some months of patience, I found it
‘ expedient to part with, before I left Geneva some
‘ time. On arriving at Milan, I found this gentleman
‘ in very good society, where he prospered for some
‘ weeks: but, at length, at the theatre he quarrelled
‘ with an Austrian officer, and was sent out by the
‘ government in twenty-four hours. I was not present
‘ at his squabble; but, on hearing that he was put
‘ under arrest, I went and got him out of his confine-
‘ ment, but could not prevent his being sent off, which,
‘ indeed, he partly deserved, being quite in the wrong,
‘ and having begun a row for row’s sake. I had pre-
‘ ceded the Austrian government some weeks myself,
‘ in giving him his congé from Geneva. He is not a
‘ bad fellow, but very young and hot-headed, and more
‘ likely to incur diseases than to cure them. Hobhouse
‘ and myself found it useless to intercede for him.
‘ This happened some time before we left Milan. He
‘ is gone to Florence.

‘ At Milan I saw, and was visited by, Monti, the
‘ most celebrated of the living Italian poets. He
‘ seems near sixty: in face he is like the late Cooke
‘ the actor. His frequent changes in politics have
‘ made him very unpopular as a man. I saw many
‘ more of their literati; but none whose names are well
‘ known in England, except Acerbi. I lived much
‘ with the Italians, particularly with the Marquis of
‘ Breme’s family, who are very able and intelligent
‘ men, especially the Abate. There was a famous
‘ improvvisatore who held forth while I was there.
‘ His fluency astonished me; but, although I under-

‘ stand Italian, and speak it (with more readiness than
‘ accuracy), I could only carry off a few very common-
‘ place mythological images, and one line about Arte-
‘ misia, and another about Algiers, with sixty words
‘ of an entire tragedy about Etocles and Polynices.
‘ Some of the Italians liked him—others called his
‘ performance ‘seccatura” (a devilish good word, by
‘ the way)—and all Milan was in controversy about
‘ him.

‘ The state of morals in these parts is in some sort
‘ lax. A mother and son were pointed out at the
‘ theatre, as being pronounced by the Milanese world
‘ to be of the Theban dynasty—but this was all. The
‘ narrator (one of the first men in Milan) seemed to be
‘ not sufficiently scandalized by the taste or the tie.
‘ All society in Milan is carried on at the opera: they
‘ have private boxes, where they play at cards, or
‘ talk, or anything else; but (except at the Cassino)
‘ there are no open houses, or balls, &c. &c.

‘ The peasant girls have all very fine dark eyes, and
‘ many of them are beautiful. There are also two dead
‘ bodies in fine preservation—one Saint Carlo Boro-
‘ meo, at Milan; the other not a saint, but a chief,
‘ named Visconti, at Monza—both of which appeared
‘ very agreeable. In one of the Boromean isles (the
‘ Isola bella), there is a large laurel—the largest
‘ known—on which Buonaparte, staying there just
‘ before the battle of Marengo, carved with his knife
‘ the word “Battaglia.” I saw the letters, now half
‘ worn out and partly erased.

‘ Excuse this tedious letter. To be tiresome is the
‘ privilege of old age and absence: I avail myself of
‘ the latter, and the former I have anticipated. If I
‘ do not speak to you of my own affairs, it is not from

‘ want of confidence, but to spare you and myself.
‘ My day is over—what then?—I have had it. To
‘ be sure, I have shortened it; and if I had done as
‘ much by this letter, it would have been as well.
‘ But you will forgive that, if not the other faults of
‘ Yours ever and most affectionately,
‘ B.

‘ *P.S. November 7th, 1816.*

‘ I have been over Verona. The amphitheatre is
‘ wonderful—beats even Greece. Of the truth of
‘ Juliet’s story they seem tenacious to a degree, in-
‘ sisting on the fact—giving a date (1303), and show-
‘ ing a tomb. It is a plain, open, and partly decayed
‘ sarcophagus, with withered leaves in it, in a wild
‘ and desolate conventual garden, once a cemetery, now
‘ ruined to the very graves. The situation struck me
‘ as very appropriate to the legend, being blighted as
‘ their love. I have brought away a few pieces of the
‘ granite, to give to my daughter and my nieces. Of
‘ the other marvels of this city, paintings, antiquities,
‘ &c., excepting the tombs of the Scaliger princes, I
‘ have no pretensions to judge. The gothic monu-
‘ ments of the Scaligers pleased me, but “ a poor vir-
‘ tuoso am I,” and ever yours.’

It must have been observed, in my account of Lord Byron’s life previous to his marriage, that, without leaving altogether unnoticed (what, indeed, was too notorious to be so evaded) certain affairs of gallantry in which he had the reputation of being engaged, I have thought it right, besides refraining from such details in my narrative, to suppress also whatever passages in his Journals and Letters might be supposed to bear too personally or particularly on the same deli-

cate topics. Incomplete as the strange history of his mind and heart must, in one of its most interesting chapters, be left by these omissions, still a deference to that peculiar sense of decorum in this country, which marks the mention of such frailties as hardly a less crime than the commission of them, and, still more, the regard due to the feelings of the living, who ought not rashly to be made to suffer for the errors of the dead, have combined to render this sacrifice, however much it may be regretted, necessary.

We have now, however, shifted the scene to a region where less caution is requisite;—where, from the different standard applied to female morals in these respects, if the wrong itself be not lessened by this diminution of the consciousness of it, less scruple may be, at least, felt towards persons so circumstanced, and whatever delicacy we may think right to exercise in speaking of their frailties must be with reference rather to our views and usages than theirs.

Availing myself, with this latter qualification, of the greater latitude thus allowed me, I shall venture so far to depart from the plan hitherto pursued, as to give, with but little suppression, the noble poet's letters relative to his Italian adventures. To throw a veil altogether over these irregularities of his private life would be to afford—were it even practicable—but a partial portraiture of his character; while, on the other hand, to rob him of the advantage of being himself the historian of his errors (where no injury to others can flow from the disclosure) would be to deprive him of whatever softening light can be thrown round such transgressions by the vivacity and fancy, the passionate love of beauty, and the strong yearning after affection which will be found to have, more or less, mingled with even

the least refined of his attachments. Neither is any great danger to be apprehended from the sanction or seduction of such an example; as they who would dare to plead the authority of Lord Byron for their errors must first be able to trace them to the same palliating sources,—to that sensibility, whose very excesses showed its strength and depth,—that stretch of imagination, to the very verge, perhaps, of what reason can bear without giving way,—that whole combination, in short, of grand but disturbing powers, which alone could be allowed to extenuate such moral derangement, but which, even in him thus dangerously gifted, were insufficient to excuse it.

Having premised these few observations, I shall now proceed, with less interruption, to lay his correspondence, during this and the two succeeding years, before the reader:—

LETTER 252.

TO MR. MOORE.

Venice, November 17th, 1816.

‘ I wrote to you from Verona the other day in my
 ‘ progress hither, which letter I hope you will receive.
 ‘ Some three years ago, or it may be more, I recollect
 ‘ your telling me that you had received a letter from
 ‘ our friend Sam, dated “ On board his gondola.” *My*
 ‘ gondola is, at this present, waiting for me on the
 ‘ canal; but I prefer writing to you in the house, it
 ‘ being autumn—and rather an English autumn than
 ‘ otherwise. It is my intention to remain at Venice
 ‘ during the winter, probably, as it has always been
 ‘ (next to the East) the greenest island of my imagina-
 ‘ tion. It has not disappointed me; though its evident
 ‘ decay would, perhaps, have that effect upon others.
 ‘ But I have been familiar with ruins too long to dislike

‘ desolation. Besides, I have fallen in love, which,
‘ next to falling into the canal (which would be of no
‘ use, as I can swim), is the best or the worst thing I
‘ could do. I have got some extremely good apart-
‘ ments in the house of a “ Merchant of Venice,” who
‘ is a good deal occupied with business, and has a wife
‘ in her twenty-second year. Marianna (that is her
‘ name) is in her appearance altogether like an antelope.
‘ She has the large, black, oriental eyes, with that
‘ peculiar expression in them which is seen rarely
‘ among *Europeans*—even the Italians—and which
‘ many of the Turkish women give themselves by ting-
‘ ing the eyelid,—an art not known out of that coun-
‘ try, I believe. This expression she has *naturally*,—
‘ and something more than this. In short, I cannot
‘ describe the effect of this kind of eye,—at least upon
‘ me. Her features are regular, and rather aquiline—
‘ mouth small—skin clear and soft, with a kind of
‘ hectic colour—forehead remarkably good : her hair
‘ is of the dark gloss, curl, and colour of Lady J * *’s :
‘ her figure is light and pretty, and she is a famous
‘ songstress—scientifically so : her natural voice (in
‘ conversation, I mean) is very sweet ; and the naïveté
‘ of the Venetian dialect is always pleasing in the
‘ mouth of a woman.

‘ *November 23.*

‘ You will perceive that my description, which was
‘ proceeding with the minuteness of a passport, has
‘ been interrupted for several days.

‘ *December 5.*

‘ Since my former dates, I do not know that I have
‘ much to add on the subject, and luckily, nothing to
‘ take away ; for I am more pleased than ever with my

‘ Venetian, and begin to feel very serious on that point
‘ —so much so, that I shall be silent.

‘ By way of divertisement, I am studying daily, at
‘ an Armenian monastery, the Armenian language. I
‘ found that my mind wanted something craggy to
‘ break upon; and this—as the most difficult thing I
‘ could discover here for an amusement—I have chosen,
‘ to torture me into attention. It is a rich language,
‘ however, and would amply repay any one the trouble
‘ of learning it. I try, and shall go on;—but I answer
‘ for nothing, least of all for my intentions or my suc-
‘ cess. There are some very curious MSS. in the
‘ monastery, as well as books; translations also from
‘ Greek originals, now lost, and from Persian and
‘ Syriac, &c.; besides works of their own people. Four
‘ years ago the French instituted an Armenian pro-
‘ fessorship. Twenty pupils presented themselves on
‘ Monday morning, full of noble ardour, ingenuous
‘ youth, and impregnable industry. They persevered,
‘ with a courage worthy of the nation and of universal
‘ conquest, till Thursday; when *fifteen* of the *twenty*
‘ succumbed to the six-and-twentieth letter of the
‘ alphabet. It is, to be sure, a Waterloo of an Alpha-
‘ bet—that must be said for them. But it is so like
‘ these fellows, to do by it as they did by their sove-
‘ reigns—abandon both; to parody the old rhymes,
‘ “Take a thing and give a thing”—“Take a King
‘ and give a King.” They are the worst of animals,
‘ except their conquerors.

‘ I hear that H—n is your neighbour, having a living
‘ in Derbyshire. You will find him an excellent-
‘ hearted fellow, as well as one of the cleverest; a little,
‘ perhaps, too much japanned by preferment in the
‘ church and the tuition of youth, as well as inoculated

‘ with the disease of domestic felicity, besides being
‘ overrun with fine feelings about woman and *constancy*
‘ (that small change of Love, which people exact so
‘ rigidly, receive in such counterfeit coin, and repay in
‘ baser metal); but, otherwise, a very worthy man,
‘ who has lately got a pretty wife, and (I suppose) a
‘ child by this time. Pray remember me to him, and
‘ say that I know not which to envy most his neigh-
‘ bourhood—him, or you.

‘ Of Venice I shall say little. You must have seen
‘ many descriptions; and they are most of them like.
‘ It is a poetical place; and classical, to us, from Shak-
‘ speare and Otway. I have not yet sinned against it
‘ in verse, nor do I know that I shall do so, having
‘ been tuneless since I crossed the Alps, and feeling,
‘ as yet, no renewal of the “*estro*.” By the way, I
‘ suppose you have seen “*Glenarvon*.” Madame de
‘ Staël lent it me to read from Copet last autumn. It
‘ seems to me that, if the authoress had written the
‘ *truth*, and nothing but the truth—the whole truth—
‘ the romance would not only have been more *romantic*,
‘ but more entertaining. As for the likeness, the pic-
‘ ture can’t be good—I did not sit long enough. When
‘ you have leisure, let me hear from and of you, be-
‘ lieving me ever and truly yours most affectionately,
‘ B.

‘ P.S. Oh! *your Poem*—is it out? I hope Long-
‘ man has paid his thousands: but don’t you do as
‘ H * * T * *’s father did, who, having made money by
‘ a quarto tour, became a vinegar merchant; when, lo!
‘ his vinegar turned sweet (and be d—d to it) and
‘ ruined him. My last letter to you (from Verona)
‘ was enclosed to Murray—have you got it? Direct
‘ to me *here, poste restante*. There are no English
‘ here at present. There were several in Switzerland

‘ —some women; but, except Lady Dalrymple Hamilton, most of them as ugly as virtue—at least, those that I saw.’

LETTER 253.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ Venice, December 24th, 1816.

‘ I have taken a fit of writing to you, which portends postage—once from Verona—once from Venice, and again from Venice—*thrice* that is. For this you may thank yourself, for I heard that you complained of my silence—so, here goes for garrulity.

‘ I trust that you received my other twain of letters. My “way of life” (or “May of life,” which is it, according to the commentators?)—my “way of life” is fallen into great regularity. In the mornings I go over in my gondola to babble Armenian with the friars of the convent of St. Lazarus, and to help one of them in correcting the English of an English and Armenian grammar which he is publishing. In the evenings I do one of many nothings—either at the theatres, or some of the conversaziones, which are like our routs, or rather worse, for the women sit in a semicircle by the lady of the mansion, and the men stand about the room. To be sure, there is one improvement upon ours—instead of lemonade with their ices, they hand about stiff *rum-punch—punch*, by my palate; and this they think *English*. I would not disabuse them of so agreeable an error,—“no, not for Venice.”

‘ Last night I was at the Count Governor’s, which, of course, comprises the best society, and is very much like other gregarious meetings in every country,—as in ours,—except that, instead of the Bishop of Winchester, you have the Patriarch of Venice; and a motley crew of Austrians, Germans, noble Vene-

‘ tians, foreigners, and, if you see a quiz, you may be
‘ sure he is a Consul. Oh, by the way, I forgot, when
‘ I wrote from Verona, to tell you that at Milan I met
‘ with a countryman of yours—a Colonel * * * *, a very
‘ excellent, good-natured fellow, who knows and shows
‘ all about Milan, and is, as it were, a native there.
‘ He is particularly civil to strangers, and this is his
‘ history,—at least, an episode of it.

‘ Six-and-twenty years ago, Col. * * * *, then an
‘ ensign, being in Italy, fell in love with the Marchesa
‘ * * * *, and she with him. The lady must be, at least,
‘ twenty years his senior. The war broke out; he
‘ returned to England, to serve—not his country, for
‘ that’s Ireland—but England, which is a different
‘ thing; and *she*—heaven knows what she did. In the
‘ year 1814, the first annunciation of the Definitive
‘ Treaty of peace (and tyranny) was developed to the
‘ astonished Milanese by the arrival of Col. * * * *,
‘ who, flinging himself full length at the feet of Mad.
‘ * * * *, murmured forth, in half-forgotten Irish Ita-
‘ lian, eternal vows of indelible constancy. The lady
‘ screamed and exclaimed, “Who are you?” The
‘ Colonel cried, “What, don’t you know me? I am so
‘ and so,” &c. &c. &c.; till, at length, the Marchesa,
‘ mounting from reminiscence to reminiscence, through
‘ the lovers of the intermediate twenty-five years,
‘ arrived at last at the recollection of her *povero* sub-
‘ lieutenant. She then said, “Was there ever such
‘ virtue?” (that was her very word) and, being now
‘ a widow, gave him apartments in her palace, rein-
‘ stated him in all the rights of wrong, and held
‘ him up to the admiring world as a miracle of
‘ incontinent fidelity, and the unshaken Abdiel of
‘ absence.

‘ Methinks this is as pretty a moral tale as any of
‘ Marmontel’s. Here is another. The same lady,
‘ several years ago, made an escapade with a Swede,
‘ Count Fersen (the same whom the Stockholm mob
‘ quartered and lapidated not very long since), and they
‘ arrived at an Osteria on the road to Rome or there-
‘ abouts. It was a summer evening, and, while they
‘ were at supper, they were suddenly regaled by a
‘ symphony of fiddles in an adjacent apartment, so
‘ prettily played, that, wishing to hear them more dis-
‘ tinctly, the Count rose, and going into the musical
‘ society, said, “ Gentlemen, I am sure that, as a
‘ company of gallant cavaliers, you will be de-
‘ lighted to show your skill to a lady, who feels
‘ anxious, &c. &c.” The men of harmony were all
‘ acquiescence—every instrument was tuned and
‘ toned, and, striking up one of their most ambrosial
‘ airs, the whole band followed the Count to the
‘ lady’s apartment. At their head was the first fid-
‘ dler, who, bowing and fiddling at the same moment,
‘ headed his troop and advanced up the room. Death
‘ and discord!—it was the Marquis himself, who was
‘ on a serenading party in the country, while his spouse
‘ had run away from town. The rest may be ima-
‘ gined—but, first of all, the lady tried to persuade
‘ him that she was there on purpose to meet him, and
‘ had chosen this method for an harmonic surprise. So
‘ much for this gossip, which amused me when I
‘ heard it, and I send it to you, in the hope it may
‘ have the like effect. Now we’ll return to Venice.

‘ The day after to-morrow (to-morrow being Christ-
‘ mas-day) the Carnival begins. I dine with the
‘ Countess Albrizzi and a party, and go to the opera.
‘ On that day the Phenix (not the Insurance Office,

‘ but) the theatre of that name, opens: I have got me
‘ a box there for the season, for two reasons, one of
‘ which is, that the music is remarkably good. The
‘ Contessa Albrizzi, of whom I have made mention, is
‘ the De Staël of Venice, not young, but a very learned,
‘ unaffected, good-natured woman, very polite to
‘ strangers, and, I believe, not at all dissolute, as most
‘ of the women are. She has written very well on the
‘ works of Canova, and also a volume of Characters,
‘ besides other printed matter. She is of Corfu, but
‘ married a dead Venetian—that is, dead since he
‘ married.

‘ My flame (my “ Donna ” whom I spoke of in my
‘ former epistle, my Marianna) is still my Marianna,
‘ and I, her—what she pleases. She is by far the
‘ prettiest woman I have seen here, and the most love-
‘ able I have met with anywhere—as well as one of the
‘ most singular. I believe I told you the rise and pro-
‘ gress of our *liaison* in my former letter. Lest that
‘ should not have reached you, I will merely repeat
‘ that she is a Venetian, two-and-twenty years old,
‘ married to a merchant well to do in the world, and
‘ that she has great black oriental eyes, and all the
‘ qualities which her eyes promise. Whether being
‘ in love with her has steeled me or not, I do not know;
‘ but I have not seen many other women who seem
‘ pretty. The nobility, in particular, are a sad-looking
‘ race—the gentry rather better. And now, what art
‘ *thou* doing?

‘ What are you doing now,

‘ Oh Thomas Moore?

‘ What are you doing now,

‘ Oh Thomas Moore?

‘ Sighing or suing now,

‘ Rhyming or wooing now,

‘ Billing or cooing now,

‘ Which, Thomas Moore?’

‘ Are you not near the Luddites? By the Lord! if
 ‘ there’s a row, but I’ll be among ye! How go on the
 ‘ weavers—the breakers of frames—the Lutherans of
 ‘ politics—the reformers?

‘ As the Liberty lads o’er the sea
 ‘ Bought their freedom, and cheaply, with blood,
 ‘ So we, boys, we
 ‘ Will *die* fighting, or *live* free,
 ‘ And down with all kings but King Ludd!

 ‘ When the web that we weave is complete,
 ‘ And the shuttle exchanged for the sword,
 ‘ We will fling the winding-sheet
 ‘ O’er the despot at our feet,
 ‘ And dye it deep in the gore he has pour’d.

 ‘ Though black as his heart its hue,
 ‘ Since his veins are corrupted to mud,
 ‘ Yet this is the dew
 ‘ Which the tree shall renew
 ‘ Of Liberty, planted by Ludd!

‘ There’s an amiable *chanson* for you—all im-
 ‘ promptu. I have written it principally to shock
 ‘ your neighbour * * * *, who is all clergy and loyalty
 ‘ —mirth and innocence—milk and water.

‘ But the Carnival’s coming,
 ‘ Oh Thomas Moore,
 ‘ The Carnival’s coming,
 ‘ Oh Thomas Moore,
 ‘ Masking and humming,
 ‘ Fifeing and drumming,
 ‘ Guitarring and strumming,
 ‘ Oh Thomas Moore.

‘ The other night I saw a new play,—and the author.
 ‘ The subject was the sacrifice of Isaac. The play
 ‘ succeeded, and they called for the author—according
 ‘ to continental custom—and he presented himself,
 ‘ a noble Venetian, Mali, or Malapiero, by name.
 ‘ Mala was his name, and *pessima* his production,—

‘ at least, I thought so, and I ought to know, having
‘ read more or less of five hundred Drury-lane offer-
‘ ings, during my coadjutorship with the sub-and-super
‘ Committee.

‘ When does your Poem of Poems come out? I
‘ hear that the E. R. has cut up Coleridge’s Christa-
‘ bel, and declared against me for praising it. I
‘ praised it, firstly, because I thought well of it;
‘ secondly, because Coleridge was in great distress,
‘ and, after doing what little I could for him in essen-
‘ tials, I thought that the public avowal of my good
‘ opinion might help him further, at least with the
‘ booksellers. I am very sorry that J * * has attacked
‘ him, because, poor fellow, it will hurt him in mind
‘ and pocket. As for me, he’s welcome—I shall never
‘ think less of J * * for anything he may say against me
‘ or mine in future.

‘ I suppose Murray has sent you, or will send (for
‘ I do not know whether they are out or no) the poem,
‘ or poesies, of mine, of last summer. By the mass!
‘ they are sublime—‘ Ganion Coheriza ’—gainsay who
‘ dares! Pray, let me hear from you, and of you, and,
‘ at least, let me know that you have received these
‘ three letters. Direct, right *here*, *poste restante*.

‘ Ever and ever, &c.

‘ P.S. I heard the other day of a pretty trick of a
‘ bookseller, who has published some d—d nonsense,
‘ swearing the bastards to me, and saying he gave me
‘ five hundred guineas for them. He lies—I never
‘ wrote such stuff, never saw the poems, nor the pub-
‘ lisher of them, in my life, nor had any communica-
‘ tion, directly or indirectly, with the fellow. Pray
‘ say as much for me, if need be. I have written to
‘ Murray, to make him contradict the impostor.’

LETTER 254.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, November 25th, 1816.*

‘ It is some months since I have heard from or of
‘ you—I think, not since I left Diodati. From Milan I
‘ wrote once or twice; but have been here some little
‘ time, and intend to pass the winter without removing.
‘ I was much pleased with the Lago di Garda, and with
‘ Verona, particularly the amphitheatre, and a sarco-
‘ phagus in a convent garden, which they show as
‘ Juliet’s: they insist on the *truth* of her history.
‘ Since my arrival at Venice, the lady of the Austrian
‘ governor told me that between Verona and Vicenza
‘ there are still ruins of the castle of the *Montec-*
‘ *chi*, and a chapel once appertaining to the Capulets.
‘ Romeo seems to have been of *Vicenza*, by the tradi-
‘ tion; but I was a good deal surprised to find so firm
‘ a faith in Bandello’s novel, which seems really to
‘ have been founded on a fact.

‘ Venice pleases me as much as I expected, and I
‘ expected much. It is one of those places which
‘ I know before I see them, and has always haunted
‘ me the most after the East. I like the gloomy gaiety
‘ of their gondolas, and the silence of their canals. I
‘ do not even dislike the evident decay of the city,
‘ though I regret the singularity of its vanished cos-
‘ tume: however, there is much left still; the Carni-
‘ val, too, is coming.

‘ St. Mark’s, and indeed Venice, is most alive at
‘ night. The theatres are not open till *nine*, and the
‘ society is proportionably late. All this is to my
‘ taste, but most of your countrymen miss and regret
‘ the rattle of hackney coaches, without which they
‘ can’t sleep.

‘ I have got remarkably good apartments in a private

‘ house; I see something of the inhabitants (having
‘ had a good many letters to some of them); I have
‘ got my gondola; I read a little, and luckily could
‘ speak Italian (more fluently than correctly) long ago.
‘ I am studying, out of curiosity, the *Venetian* dialect,
‘ which is very naïve, and soft, and peculiar, though
‘ not at all classical; I go out frequently, and am in
‘ very good contentment.

‘ The Helen of Canova (a bust which is in the house
‘ of Madame the Countess d’Albrizzi, whom I know)
‘ is, without exception, to my mind, the most perfectly
‘ beautiful of human conceptions, and far beyond my
‘ ideas of human execution.

‘ In this beloved marble view,
‘ Above the works and thoughts of man,
‘ What Nature *could*, but *would not*, do,
‘ And Beauty and Canova *can* !
‘ Beyond imagination’s power,
‘ Beyond the bard’s defeated art,
‘ With immortality her dower,
‘ Behold the *Helen* of the *heart* !

‘ Talking of the “heart” reminds me that I have fallen
‘ in love—fathomless love; but lest you should make
‘ some splendid mistake, and envy me the possession
‘ of some of those princesses or countesses with whose
‘ affections your English voyagers are apt to invest
‘ themselves, I beg leave to tell you that my goddess
‘ is only the wife of a “Merchant of Venice;” but then
‘ she is pretty as an antelope, is but two-and-twenty
‘ years old, has the large, black, oriental eyes, with
‘ the Italian countenance, and dark glossy hair, of the
‘ curl and colour of Lady J**’s. Then she has the
‘ voice of a lute, and the song of a seraph (though not
‘ quite so sacred), besides a long postscript of graces,
‘ virtues, and accomplishments, enough to furnish out

‘ a new chapter for Solomon’s Song. But her great
 ‘ merit is finding out mine—there is nothing so ami-
 ‘ able as discernment.

‘ The general race of women appear to be hand-
 ‘ some; but in Italy, as on almost all the continent,
 ‘ the highest orders are by no means a well-looking
 ‘ generation, and indeed reckoned by their countrymen
 ‘ very much otherwise. Some are exceptions, but
 ‘ most of them as ugly as Virtue herself.

‘ If you write, address to me here, *poste restante*, as
 ‘ I shall probably stay the winter over. I never see a
 ‘ newspaper, and know nothing of England, except in
 ‘ a letter now and then from my sister. Of the MS.
 ‘ sent you, I know nothing, except that you have
 ‘ received it, and are to publish it, &c. &c.: but when,
 ‘ where, and how, you leave me to guess; but it don’t
 ‘ much matter.

‘ I suppose you have a world of works passing
 ‘ through your press for next year? When does
 ‘ Moore’s Poem appear? I sent a letter for him, ad-
 ‘ dressed to your care the other day.’

LETTER 255.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, December 4th, 1816.*

‘ I have written to you so frequently of late, that
 ‘ you will think me a bore; as I think you a very
 ‘ impolite person, for not answering my letters from
 ‘ Switzerland, Milan, Verona, and Venice. There
 ‘ are some things I wanted, and want, to know, viz.,
 ‘ whether Mr. Davies, of inaccurate memory, had or
 ‘ had not delivered the MS. as delivered to him; be-
 ‘ cause, if he has not, you will find that he will boun-
 ‘ tifully bestow transcriptions on all the curious of his
 ‘ acquaintance, in which case you may probably find

‘ your publication anticipated by the “Cambridge” or
‘ other Chronicles. In the next place,—I forget what
‘ was next; but, in the third place, I want to hear
‘ whether you have yet published, or when you mean
‘ to do so, or why you have not done so, because in
‘ your last (Sept. 20th,—you may be ashamed of the
‘ date), you talked of this being done immediately.

‘ From England I hear nothing, and know nothing
‘ of anything or anybody. I have but one corre-
‘ spondent (except Mr. Kinnaird on business now and
‘ then), and her a female; so that I know no more of
‘ your island, or city, than the Italian version of the
‘ French papers chooses to tell me, or the advertise-
‘ ments of Mr. Colburn tagged to the end of your
‘ Quarterly Review for the year *ago*. I wrote to you
‘ at some length last week, and have little to add,
‘ except that I have begun, and am proceeding in, a
‘ study of the Armenian language, which I acquire,
‘ as well as I can, at the Armenian convent, where I
‘ go every day to take lessons of a learned friar, and
‘ have gained some singular and not useless infor-
‘ mation with regard to the literature and customs
‘ of that oriental people. They have an establish-
‘ ment here—a church and convent of ninety monks,
‘ very learned and accomplished men, some of them.
‘ They have also a press, and make great efforts for
‘ the enlightening of their nation. I find the lan-
‘ guage (which is *twin*, the *literal* and the *vulgar*)
‘ difficult, but not invincible (at least, I hope not).
‘ I shall go on. I found it necessary to twist my
‘ mind round some severer study, and this, as being
‘ the hardest I could devise here, will be a file for
‘ the serpent.

‘ I mean to remain here till the spring, so address to

‘ me *directly* to *Venice, poste restante*.—Mr. Hobhouse,
 ‘ for the present, is gone to Rome, with his brother,
 ‘ brother’s wife, and sister, who overtook him here :
 ‘ he returns in two months. I should have gone too,
 ‘ but I fell in love, and must stay that over. I should
 ‘ think *that* and the Armenian alphabet will last the
 ‘ winter. The lady has, luckily for me, been less ob-
 ‘ durate than the language, or, between the two, I
 ‘ should have lost my remains of sanity. By the way,
 ‘ she is not an Armenian but a Venetian, as I believe
 ‘ I told you in my last. As for Italian, I am fluent
 ‘ enough, even in its Venetian modification, which is
 ‘ something like the Somersetshire version of English ;
 ‘ and as for the more classical dialects, I had not for-
 ‘ got my former practice much during my voyaging.

‘ Yours, ever and truly,

‘ B.

‘ P. S. Remember me to Mr. Gifford.’

LETTER 256.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, Dec. 9th, 1816.*

‘ In a letter from England, I am informed that a
 ‘ man named Johnson has taken upon himself to pub-
 ‘ lish some poems called a “ Pilgrimage to Jerusalem,
 ‘ a Tempest, and an Address to my Daughter,” &c. and
 ‘ to attribute them to me, adding that he had paid five
 ‘ hundred guineas for them. The answer to this is
 ‘ short: *I never wrote such poems, never received the*
 ‘ *sum he mentions, nor any other in the same quarter,*
 ‘ *nor* (as far as moral or mortal certainty can be sure)
 ‘ *ever had, directly or indirectly, the slightest communi-*
 ‘ *cation with Johnson in my life ;* not being aware that
 ‘ the person existed till this intelligence gave me to
 ‘ understand that there were such people. Nothing

‘ surprises me, or this perhaps *would*, and most
‘ things amuse me, or this probably would *not*. With
‘ regard to myself, the man has merely *lied*; that’s
‘ natural—his betters have set him the example: but
‘ with regard to you, his assertion may perhaps injure
‘ you in your publications; and I desire that it may re-
‘ ceive the most public and unqualified contradiction.
‘ I do not know that there is any punishment for a thing
‘ of this kind, and if there were, I should not feel dis-
‘ posed to pursue this ingenious mountebank farther
‘ than was necessary for his confutation; but thus far
‘ it may be necessary to proceed.

‘ You will make what use you please of this letter;
‘ and Mr. Kinnaird, who has power to act for me in
‘ my absence, will, I am sure, readily join you in any
‘ steps which it may be proper to take with regard to
‘ the absurd falsehood of this poor creature. As you
‘ will have recently received several letters from me
‘ on my way to Venice, as well as two written since
‘ my arrival, I will not at present trouble you further.

‘ Ever, &c.

‘ P. S. Pray let me hear that you have received this
‘ letter. Address to Venice, *poste restante*.

‘ To prevent the recurrence of similar fabrications,
‘ you may state, that I consider myself responsible for
‘ no publication from the year 1812 up to the present
‘ date, which is not from your press. I speak of course
‘ from that period, because, previously, Cawthorn and
‘ Ridge had both printed compositions of mine. “A
‘ Pilgrimage to Jerusalem!” How the devil should I
‘ write about *Jerusalem*, never having yet been there?
‘ As for “A Tempest,” it was *not* a *tempest* when I
‘ left England, but a very fresh breeze: and as to an
‘ “Address to little Ada” (who, by the way, is a year

‘ old to-morrow), I never wrote a line about her, except in “Farewell” and the Third Canto of Childe Harold.’

LETTER 257.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ Venice, Dec. 27th, 1816.

‘ As the demon of silence seems to have possessed you, I am determined to have my revenge in postage: this is my sixth or seventh letter since summer and Switzerland. My last was an injunction to contradict and consign to confusion that Cheapside impostor, who (I heard by a letter from your island) had thought proper to append my name to his spurious poesy, of which I know nothing, nor of his pretended purchase or copyright. I hope you have, at least, received *that* letter.

‘ As the news of Venice must be very interesting to you, I will regale you with it.

‘ Yesterday being the feast of St. Stephen, every mouth was put in motion. There was nothing but fiddling and playing on the virginals, and all kinds of conceits and divertissements, on every canal of this aquatic city. I dined with the Countess Albrizzi and a Paduan and Venetian party, and afterwards went to the opera, at the Fenice theatre (which opens for the Carnival on that day),—the finest, by the way, I have ever seen: it beats our theatres hollow in beauty and scenery, and those of Milan and Brescia bow before it. The opera and its sirens were much like other operas and women, but the subject of the said opera was something edifying; it turned—the plot and conduct thereof—upon a fact narrated by Livy of a hundred and fifty married ladies having

‘ poisoned a hundred and fifty husbands in good old
‘ times. The bachelors of Rome believed this extra-
‘ ordinary mortality to be merely the common effect of
‘ matrimony or a pestilence ; but the surviving Bene-
‘ dicts, being all seized with the cholic, examined into
‘ the matter, and found that “ their possets had been
‘ drugged ;” the consequence of which was, much
‘ scandal and several suits at law. This is really and
‘ truly the subject of the musical piece at the Fenice ;
‘ and you can’t conceive what pretty things are sung and
‘ recitativoed about the *horrenda strage*. The conclu-
‘ sion was a lady’s head about to be chopped off by a
‘ lictor, but (I am sorry to say) he left it on, and she
‘ got up and sung a trio with the two Consuls, the
‘ Senate in the back-ground being chorus. The ballet
‘ was distinguished by nothing remarkable, except that
‘ the principal she-dancer went into convulsions be-
‘ cause she was not applauded on her first appearance ;
‘ and the manager came forward to ask if there was
‘ “ ever a physician in the theatre.” There was a
‘ Greek one in my box, whom I wished very much to
‘ volunteer his services, being sure that in this case
‘ these would have been the last convulsions which
‘ would have troubled the ballarina ; but he would
‘ not. The crowd was enormous, and in coming out,
‘ having a lady under my arm, I was obliged, in
‘ making way, almost to “ beat a Venetian and traduce
‘ the state,” being compelled to regale a person with
‘ an English punch in the guts, which sent him as far
‘ back as the squeeze and the passage would admit.
‘ He did not ask for another, but, with great signs of
‘ disapprobation and dismay, appealed to his com-
‘ patriots, who laughed at him.

‘ I am going on with my Armenian studies in a

‘ morning, and assisting and stimulating in the English
‘ portion of an English and Armenian grammar, now
‘ publishing at the convent of St. Lazarus.

‘ The superior of the friars is a bishop, and a fine
‘ old fellow, with the beard of a meteor. Father Pas-
‘ chal is also a learned and pious soul. He was two
‘ years in England.

‘ I am still dreadfully in love with the Adriatic lady
‘ whom I spake of in a former letter (and *not* in *this*—
‘ I add, for fear of mistakes, for the only one mentioned
‘ in the first part of this epistle is elderly and bookish,
‘ two things which I have ceased to admire), and love
‘ in this part of the world is no sinecure. This is also
‘ the season when everybody make up their intrigues
‘ for the ensuing year, and cut for partners for the
‘ next deal.

‘ And now, if you don’t write, I don’t know what I
‘ won’t say or do, nor what I will. Send me some
‘ news—good news. Yours very truly, &c. &c. &c.
‘ B.

‘ P.S. Remember me to Mr. Gifford, with all duty.

‘ I hear that the Edinburgh Review has cut up
‘ Coleridge’s *Christabel*, and me for praising it, which
‘ omen, I think, bodes no great good to your forthcome
‘ or coming *Canto and Castle* (of *Chillon*). My run of
‘ luck within the last year seems to have taken a turn
‘ every way ; but never mind, I will bring myself
‘ through in the end—if not, I can be but where I
‘ began. In the mean time, I am not displeased to be
‘ where I am—I mean, at Venice. My Adriatic nymph
‘ is this moment here, and I must therefore repose from
‘ this letter.’

LETTER 258.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, Jan. 2d, 1817.*

‘ Your letter has arrived. Pray, in publishing the
‘ Third Canto, have you *omitted* any passages? I hope
‘ *not*; and indeed wrote to you on my way over the
‘ Alps to prevent such an incident. Say in your next
‘ whether or not the *whole* of the Canto (as sent to
‘ you) has been published. I wrote to you again the
‘ other day (*twice*, I think), and shall be glad to hear
‘ of the reception of those letters.

‘ To-day is the 2d of January. On this day *three*
‘ years ago the Corsair’s publication is dated, I think,
‘ in my letter to Moore. On this day *two* years I mar-
‘ ried, (“ Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth,”—I
‘ sha’n’t forget the day in a hurry,) and it is odd
‘ enough that I this day received a letter from you
‘ announcing the publication of Childe Harold, &c. &c.
‘ on the day of the date of the “ Corsair ;” and I also
‘ received one from my sister, written on the 10th of
‘ December, my daughter’s birthday (and relative
‘ chiefly to my daughter), and arriving on the day of
‘ the date of my marriage, this present 2d of January,
‘ the month of my birth,—and various other astrolo-
‘ gous matters, which I have no time to enumerate.

‘ By the way, you might as well write to Hentsch,
‘ my Geneva banker, and inquire whether the *two*
‘ *packets* consigned to his care were or were not deli-
‘ vered to Mr. St. Aubyn, or if they are still in his
‘ keeping. One contains papers, letters, and all the
‘ original MS. of your Third Canto, as first conceived;
‘ and the other some bones from the field of Morat.
‘ Many thanks for your news, and the good spirits in
‘ which your letter is written.

‘ Venice and I agree very well; but I do not know

‘ that I have anything new to say, except of the last
‘ new opera, which I sent in my late letter. The Car-
‘ nival is commencing, and there is a good deal of fun
‘ here and there—besides business ; for all the world
‘ are making up their intrigues for the season, chang-
‘ ing, or going on upon a renewed lease. I am very
‘ well off with Marianna, who is not at all a person to
‘ tire me ; firstly, because I do not tire of a woman *per-*
‘ *sonally*, but because they are generally bores in their
‘ disposition ; and, secondly, because she is amiable, and
‘ has a tact which is not always the portion of the fair
‘ creation ; and, thirdly, she is very pretty ; and, fourthly
‘ —but there is no occasion for further specification.
‘ So far we have gone on very well ; as to the future, I
‘ never anticipate—*carpe diem*—the past at least is
‘ one’s own, which is one reason for making sure of the
‘ present. So much for my proper *liaison*.

‘ The general state of morals here is much the
‘ same as in the Doges’ time : a woman is virtuous
‘ (according to the code) who limits herself to her hus-
‘ band and one lover ; those who have two, three, or
‘ more, are a little *wild* ; but it is only those who are
‘ indiscriminately diffuse, and form a low connexion,
‘ such as the Princess of Wales with her courier (who,
‘ by the way, is made a knight of Malta), who are con-
‘ sidered as overstepping the modesty of marriage. In
‘ Venice, the nobility have a trick of marrying with
‘ dancers and singers ; and, truth to say, the women
‘ of their own order are by no means handsome ; but
‘ the general race, the women of the second and other
‘ orders, the wives of the merchants, and proprietors,
‘ and untitled gentry, are mostly *bel’ sangue*, and it is
‘ with these that the more amatory connexions are
‘ usually formed. There are also instances of stu-

‘ pendous constancy. I know a woman of fifty who
‘ never had but one lover, who dying early, she became
‘ devout, renouncing all but her husband. She piques
‘ herself, as may be presumed, upon this miraculous
‘ fidelity, talking of it occasionally with a species of
‘ misplaced morality, which is rather amusing. There
‘ is no convincing a woman here that she is in the
‘ smallest degree deviating from the rule of right or the
‘ fitness of things in having an *amoroso*. The great
‘ sin seems to lie in concealing it, or having more than
‘ one, that is, unless such an extension of the prerogative
‘ is understood and approved of by the prior claimant.

‘ In another sheet, I send you some sheets of a gram-
‘ mar, English and Armenian, for the use of the Arme-
‘ nians, of which I promoted, and indeed induced, the
‘ publication. (It cost me but a thousand francs—French
‘ livres.) I still pursue my lessons in the language
‘ without any rapid progress, but advancing a little
‘ daily. Padre Paschal, with some little help from me,
‘ as translator of his Italian into English, is also pro-
‘ ceeding in a MS. Grammar for the *English* acquisi-
‘ tion of Armenian, which will be printed also, when
‘ finished.

‘ We want to know if there are any Armenian types
‘ and letter-press in England, at Oxford, Cambridge,
‘ or elsewhere? You know, I suppose, that, many
‘ years ago, the two Whistons published in England
‘ an original text of a history of Armenia, with their
‘ own Latin translation? Do those types still exist?
‘ and where? Pray inquire among your learned
‘ acquaintance.

‘ When this Grammar (I mean the one now print-
‘ ing) is done, will you have any objection to take forty
‘ or fifty copies, which will not cost in all above five

‘ or ten guineas, and try the curiosity of the learned
 ‘ with a sale of them? Say yes or no, as you like. I
 ‘ can assure you that they have some very curious
 ‘ books and MSS., chiefly translations from Greek ori-
 ‘ ginals now lost. They are, besides, a much respected
 ‘ and learned community, and the study of their lan-
 ‘ guage was taken up with great ardour by some lite-
 ‘ rary Frenchmen in Buonaparte’s time.

‘ I have not done a stitch of poetry since I left
 ‘ Switzerland, and have not at present the *estro* upon me.
 ‘ The truth is, that you are *afraid* of having a *Fourth*
 ‘ Canto *before* September, and of another copyright,
 ‘ but I have at present no thoughts of resuming that
 ‘ poem, nor of beginning any other. If I write, I think
 ‘ of trying prose, but I dread introducing living people,
 ‘ or applications which might be made to living people.
 ‘ Perhaps one day or other I may attempt some work of
 ‘ fancy in prose, descriptive of Italian manners and of
 ‘ human passions; but at present I am preoccupied.
 ‘ As for poesy, mine is the *dream* of the sleeping pas-
 ‘ sions; when they are awake, I cannot speak their
 ‘ language, only in their somnambulism, and just now
 ‘ they are not dormant.

‘ If Mr. Gifford wants *carte blanche* as to the Siege
 ‘ of Corinth, he has it, and may do as he likes with it.

‘ I send you a letter contradictory of the Cheapside
 ‘ man (who invented the story you speak of) the other
 ‘ day. My best respects to Mr. Gifford, and such of
 ‘ my friends as you may see at your house. I wish you
 ‘ all prosperity and new year’s gratulation, and am

‘ Yours, &c.’

To the Armenian Grammar, mentioned in the fore-
 going letter, the following interesting fragment, found

among his papers, seems to have been intended as a Preface :—

‘ The English reader will probably be surprised to
‘ find my name associated with a work of the present
‘ description, and inclined to give me more credit for
‘ my attainments as a linguist than they deserve.

‘ As I would not willingly be guilty of a deception,
‘ I will state, as shortly as I can, my own share in the
‘ compilation, with the motives which led to it. On
‘ my arrival at Venice in the year 1816, I found my
‘ mind in a state which required study, and study of a
‘ nature which should leave little scope for the imagina-
‘ tion, and furnish some difficulty in the pursuit.

‘ At this period I was much struck—in common, I
‘ believe, with every other traveller—with the society
‘ of the Convent of St. Lazarus, which appears to unite
‘ all the advantages of the monastic institution, without
‘ any of its vices.

‘ The neatness, the comfort, the gentleness, the un-
‘ affected devotion, the accomplishments, and the virtues
‘ of the brethren of the order, are well fitted to strike
‘ the man of the world with the conviction that “there
‘ is another and a better” even in this life.

‘ These men are the priesthood of an oppressed and
‘ a noble nation, which has partaken of the proscrip-
‘ tion and bondage of the Jews and of the Greeks, with-
‘ out the sullenness of the former or the servility of the
‘ latter. This people has attained riches without usury,
‘ and all the honours that can be awarded to slavery
‘ without intrigue. But they have long occupied,
‘ nevertheless, a part of “the House of Bondage,” who
‘ has lately multiplied her many mansions. It would
‘ be difficult, perhaps, to find the annals of a nation
‘ less stained with crimes than those of the Armenians

‘ whose virtues have been those of peace, and their
‘ vices those of compulsion. But whatever may have
‘ been their destiny—and it has been bitter—whatever
‘ it may be in future, their country must ever be one
‘ of the most interesting on the globe; and perhaps
‘ their language only requires to be more studied to
‘ become more attractive. If the Scriptures are rightly
‘ understood, it was in Armenia that Paradise was
‘ placed—Armenia, which has paid as dearly as the
‘ descendants of Adam for that fleeting participation
‘ of its soil in the happiness of him who was created
‘ from its dust. It was in Armenia that the flood first
‘ abated, and the dove alighted. But with the dis-
‘ appearance of Paradise itself may be dated almost the
‘ unhappiness of the country; for though long a
‘ powerful kingdom, it was scarcely ever an indepen-
‘ dent one, and the satraps of Persia and the pachas of
‘ Turkey have alike desolated the region where God
‘ created man in his own image.’

LETTER 259.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *Venice, January 28th, 1817.*

‘ Your letter of the 8th is before me. The re-
‘ medy for your plethora is simple—abstinence. I
‘ was obliged to have recourse to the like some years
‘ ago, I mean in point of *diet*, and, with the exception
‘ of some convivial weeks and days (it might be months,
‘ now and then), have kept to Pythagoras ever since.
‘ For all this, let me hear that you are better. You
‘ must not *indulge* in “filthy beer,” nor in porter, nor
‘ eat *suppers*—the last are the devil to those who
‘ swallow dinner.

‘ I am truly sorry to hear of your father’s misfor-
‘ tune—cruel at any time, but doubly cruel in advanced

‘ life. However, you will, at least, have the satisfac-
‘ tion of doing your part by him, and, depend upon it,
‘ it will not be in vain. Fortune, to be sure, is a
‘ female, but not such a b * * as the rest (always except-
‘ ing your wife and my sister from such sweeping
‘ terms); for she generally has some justice in the
‘ long run. I have no spite against her, though be-
‘ tween her and Nemesis, I have had some sore gaunt-
‘ lets to run—but then I have done my best to deserve
‘ no better. But to *you*, she is a good deal in arrear,
‘ and she will come round—mind if she don’t: you
‘ have the vigour of life, of independence, of talent,
‘ spirit, and character all with you. What you can do
‘ for yourself, you have done and will do; and surely
‘ there are some others in the world who would not be
‘ sorry to be of use, if you would allow them to be
‘ useful, or at least attempt it.

‘ I think of being in England in the spring. If
‘ there is a row, by the sceptre of King Ludd, but I’ll
‘ be one; and if there is none, and only a continuance
‘ of “this meek, piping time of peace,” I will take a
‘ cottage a hundred yards to the south of your abode,
‘ and become your neighbour; and we will compose
‘ such canticles, and hold such dialogues, as shall be
‘ the terror of the *Times* (including the newspaper of
‘ that name), and the wonder, and honour, and praise
‘ of the Morning Chronicle and posterity.

‘ I rejoice to hear of your forthcoming in February—
‘ though I tremble for the “magnificence” which you
‘ attribute to the new Childe Harold. I am glad you
‘ like it; it is a fine indistinct piece of poetical deso-
‘ lation, and my favourite. I was half mad during the
‘ time of its composition, between metaphysics, moun-
‘ tains, lakes, love unextinguishable, thoughts unutter-

‘ able, and the night-mare of my own delinquencies.
‘ I should, many a good day, have blown my brains
‘ out, but for the recollection that it would have given
‘ pleasure to my mother-in-law ; and, even *then*, if I
‘ could have been certain to haunt her——but I won’t
‘ dwell upon these trifling family matters.

‘ Venice is in the *estro* of her carnival, and I have
‘ been up these last two nights at the ridotto and the
‘ opera, and all that kind of thing. Now for an adven-
‘ ture. A few days ago a gondolier brought me a
‘ billet without a subscription, intimating a wish on
‘ the part of the writer to meet me either in gondola,
‘ or at the island of San Lazaro, or at a third rendez-
‘ vous, indicated in the note. “ I know the country’s
‘ disposition well ”—in Venice “ they do let Heaven
‘ see those tricks they dare not show,” &c. &c. ; so, for
‘ all response, I said that neither of the three places
‘ suited me ; but that I would either be at home at ten
‘ at night *alone*, or be at the ridotto at midnight, where
‘ the writer might meet me masked. At ten o’clock I
‘ was at home and alone (Marianna was gone with her
‘ husband to a *conversazione*), when the door of my
‘ apartment opened, and in walked a well-looking and
‘ (for an Italian) *bionda* girl of about nineteen, who
‘ informed me that she was married to the brother of
‘ my *amorosa*, and wished to have some conversation
‘ with me. I made a decent reply, and we had some
‘ talk in Italian and Romaic (her mother being a Greek
‘ of Corfu), when lo ! in a very few minutes in marches,
‘ to my very great astonishment, Marianna S **, in
‘ *propria personâ*, and after making a most polite
‘ curtsey to her sister-in-law and to me, without a
‘ single word seizes her said sister-in-law by the hair,
‘ and bestows upon her some sixteen slaps, which

‘ would have made your ear ache only to hear their
‘ echo. I need not describe the screaming which
‘ ensued. The luckless visiter took flight. I seized
‘ Marianna, who, after several vain efforts to get away
‘ in pursuit of the enemy, fairly went into fits in my
‘ arms; and, in spite of reasoning, eau de Cologne,
‘ vinegar, half a pint of water, and God knows what
‘ other waters beside, continued so till past midnight.

‘ After damning my servants for letting people in
‘ without apprizing me, I found that Marianna in the
‘ morning had seen her sister-in-law’s gondolier on the
‘ stairs, and, suspecting that his apparition boded her
‘ no good, had either returned of her own accord, or
‘ been followed by her maids or some other spy of her
‘ people to the conversazione, from whence she re-
‘ turned to perpetrate this piece of pugilism. I had
‘ seen fits before, and also some small scenery of the
‘ same genus in and out of our island; but this was
‘ not all. After about an hour, in comes—who? why,
‘ Signor S **, her lord and husband, and finds me with
‘ his wife fainting upon a sofa, and all the apparatus
‘ of confusion, dishevelled hair, hats, handkerchiefs,
‘ salts, smelling bottles—and the lady as pale as ashes,
‘ without sense or motion. His first question was,
‘ “What is all this?” The lady could not reply—so
‘ I did. I told him the explanation was the easiest
‘ thing in the world; but in the mean time it would
‘ be as well to recover his wife—at least, her senses.
‘ This came about in due time of suspiration and re-
‘ spiration.

‘ You need not be alarmed—jealousy is not the
‘ order of the day in Venice, and daggers are out of
‘ fashion, while duels, on love matters, are unknown—
‘ at least, with the husbands. But, for all this, it was

‘ an awkward affair ; and though he must have known
 ‘ that I made love to Marianna, yet I believe he was
 ‘ not, till that evening, aware of the extent to which
 ‘ it had gone. It is very well known that almost all the
 ‘ married women have a lover ; but it is usual to keep
 ‘ up the forms, as in other nations. I did not, there-
 ‘ fore, know what the devil to say. I could not out
 ‘ with the truth, out of regard to her, and I did not
 ‘ choose to lie for my sake ;—besides, the thing told
 ‘ itself. I thought the best way would be to let her
 ‘ explain it as she chose (a woman being never at a
 ‘ loss—the devil always sticks by them)—only deter-
 ‘ mining to protect and carry her off, in case of any
 ‘ ferocity on the part of the Signor. I saw that he
 ‘ was quite calm. She went to bed, and next day—
 ‘ how they settled it, I know not, but settle it they
 ‘ did. Well—then I had to explain to Marianna about
 ‘ this never to be sufficiently confounded sister-in-law ;
 ‘ which I did by swearing innocence, eternal constancy,
 ‘ &c. &c. But the sister-in-law, very much discom-
 ‘ posed with being treated in such wise, has (not
 ‘ having her own shame before her eyes) told the affair
 ‘ to half Venice, and the servants (who were summoned
 ‘ by the fight and the fainting) to the other half. But,
 ‘ here, nobody minds such trifles, except to be amused
 ‘ by them. I don’t know whether you will be so, but
 ‘ I have scrawled a long letter out of these follies.

‘ Believe me ever, &c.’

LETTER 260.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ Venice, January 24th, 1817.

‘ I have been requested by the Countess Albrizzi
 ‘ here to present her with “ the Works ;” and wish
 ‘ you therefore to send me a copy, that I may comply

‘ with her requisition. You may include the last published, of which I have seen and know nothing, but from your letter of the 13th of December.

‘ Mrs. Leigh tells me that most of her friends prefer the two first Cantos. I do not know whether this be the general opinion or not (it is *not hers*); but it is natural it should be so. I, however, think differently, which is natural also; but who is right, or who is wrong, is of very little consequence.

‘ Dr. Polidori, as I hear from him by letter from Pisa, is about to return to England, to go to the Brazils on a medical speculation with the Danish consul. As you are in the favour of the powers that be, could you not get him some letters of recommendation from some of your government friends to some of the Portuguese settlers? He understands his profession well, and has no want of general talents; his faults are the faults of a pardonable vanity and youth. His remaining with me was out of the question: I have enough to do to manage my own scrapes; and as precepts without example are not the most gracious homilies, I thought it better to give him his congé: but I know no great harm of him, and some good. He is clever and accomplished; knows his profession, by all accounts, well; and is honourable in his dealings, and not at all malevolent. I think, with luck, he will turn out a useful member of society (from which he will lop the diseased members) and the College of Physicians. If you can be of any use to him, or know any one who can, pray be so, as he has his fortune to make. He has kept a *medical journal* under the eye of *Vacca* (the first surgeon on the continent) at Pisa: Vacca has corrected it, and it must contain some valuable hints or infor-

‘ mation on the practice of this country. If you can
 ‘ aid him in publishing this also, by your influence
 ‘ with your brethren, do ; I do not ask you to publish
 ‘ it yourself, because that sort of request is too per-
 ‘ sonal and embarrassing. He has also a tragedy, of
 ‘ which, having seen nothing, I say nothing : but the
 ‘ very circumstance of his having made these efforts
 ‘ (if they are only efforts), at one-and-twenty, is in his
 ‘ favour, and proves him to have good dispositions for
 ‘ his own improvement. So if, in the way of com-
 ‘ mendation or recommendation, you can aid his objects
 ‘ with your government friends, I wish you would. I
 ‘ should think some of your Admiralty Board might
 ‘ be likely to have it in their power.’

LETTER 261.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, February 15th, 1817.*

‘ I have received your two letters, but not the par-
 ‘ cel you mention. As the Waterloo spoils are arrived,
 ‘ I will make you a present of them, if you choose to
 ‘ accept of them ; pray do.

‘ I do not exactly understand from your letter what
 ‘ has been omitted, or what not, in the publication ;
 ‘ but I shall see probably some day or other. I could
 ‘ not attribute any but a *good* motive to Mr. Gifford or
 ‘ yourself in such omission ; but as our politics are so
 ‘ very opposite, we should probably differ as to the
 ‘ passages. However, if it is only a *note* or notes, or
 ‘ a line or so, it cannot signify. You say “ a *poem* ;”
 ‘ *what* poem ? You can tell me in your next.

‘ Of Mr. Hobhouse’s quarrel with the Quarterly
 ‘ Review, I know very little except * *’s article itself,
 ‘ which was certainly harsh enough : but I quite agree
 ‘ that it would have been better not to answer—parti-

‘ cularly after Mr. *W. W.*, who never more will trou-
‘ ble you, trouble you. I have been uneasy, because
‘ Mr. H. told me that his letter or preface was to be
‘ addressed to *me*. Now, he and I are friends of many
‘ years; I have many obligations to him, and he none
‘ to me, which have not been cancelled and more than
‘ repaid: but Mr. Gifford and I are friends also, and
‘ he has moreover been literarily so, through thick and
‘ thin, in despite of difference of years, morals, habits,
‘ and even *politics*; and therefore I feel in a very awk-
‘ ward situation between the two, Mr. Gifford and my
‘ friend Hobhouse, and can only wish that they had no
‘ difference, or that such as they have were accommo-
‘ dated. The Answer I have not seen, for—it is odd
‘ enough for people so intimate—but Mr. Hobhouse
‘ and I are very sparing of our literary confidences.
‘ For example, the other day he wished to have a MS.
‘ of the Third Canto to read over to his brother, &c.,
‘ which was refused;—and I have never seen his jour-
‘ nals, nor he mine—(I only kept the short one of the
‘ mountains for my sister)—nor do I think that hardly
‘ ever he or I saw any of the other’s productions pre-
‘ vious to their publication.

‘ The article in the Edinburgh Review on Coleridge
‘ I have not seen; but whether I am attacked in it or
‘ not, or in any other of the same journal, I shall never
‘ think ill of Mr. Jeffrey on that account, nor forget
‘ that his conduct towards me has been certainly most
‘ handsome during the last four or more years.

‘ I forgot to mention to you that a kind of Poem in
‘ dialogue* (in blank verse) or Drama, from which
‘ “the Incantation” is an extract, begun last summer

* Manfred.

‘ in Switzerland, is finished ; it is in three acts ; but
 ‘ of a very wild, metaphysical, and inexplicable kind.
 ‘ Almost all the persons—but two or three—are Spirits
 ‘ of the earth and air, or the waters ; the scene is in
 ‘ the Alps ; the hero a kind of magician, who is tor-
 ‘ mented by a species of remorse, the cause of which is
 ‘ left half unexplained. He wanders about invoking
 ‘ these Spirits, which appear to him, and are of no
 ‘ use ; he at last goes to the very abode of the Evil
 ‘ Principle, *in propria persona*, to evocate a ghost,
 ‘ which appears, and gives him an ambiguous and
 ‘ disagreeable answer ; and in the third act he is found
 ‘ by his attendants dying in a tower where he had stu-
 ‘ died his art. You may perceive by this outline that
 ‘ I have no great opinion of this piece of phantasy ;
 ‘ but I have at least rendered it *quite impossible* for the
 ‘ stage, for which my intercourse with Drury-lane has
 ‘ given me the greatest contempt.

‘ I have not even copied it off, and feel too lazy at
 ‘ present to attempt the whole ; but when I have, I
 ‘ will send it you, and you may either throw it into the
 ‘ fire or not.’

LETTER 262.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ Venice, February 25th, 1817.

‘ I wrote to you the other day in answer to your let-
 ‘ ter ; at present I would trouble you with a commis-
 ‘ sion, if you would be kind enough to undertake it.

‘ You perhaps know Mr. Love, the jeweller, of Old
 ‘ Bond-street ? In 1813, when in the intention of re-
 ‘ turning to Turkey, I purchased of him, and paid
 ‘ (*argent comptant*) about a dozen snuff-boxes, of more
 ‘ or less value, as presents for some of my Mussulman
 ‘ acquaintance. These I have now with me. The

‘ other day, having occasion to make an alteration in
‘ the lid of one (to place a portrait in it), it has turned
‘ out to be *silver-gilt* instead of *gold*, for which last it
‘ was sold and paid for. This was discovered by the
‘ workman in trying it, before taking off the hinges
‘ and working upon the lid. I have of course recalled
‘ and preserved the box *in statu quo*. What I wish
‘ you to do is, to see the said Mr. Love, and inform
‘ him of this circumstance, adding, from me, that I
‘ will take care he shall not have done this with im-
‘ punity.

‘ If there is no remedy in law, there is at least the
‘ equitable one of making known his *guilt*,—that is,
‘ his *silver-gilt*, and be d—d to him.

‘ I shall carefully preserve all the purchases I made
‘ of him on that occasion for my return, as the plague
‘ in Turkey is a barrier to travelling there at present,
‘ or rather the endless quarantine which would be
‘ the consequence before one could land in coming
‘ back. Pray state the matter to him with due fero-
‘ city.

‘ I sent you the other day some extracts from a kind
‘ of Drama which I had begun in Switzerland and
‘ finished here; you will tell me if they are received.
‘ They were only in a letter. I have not yet had
‘ energy to copy it out, or I would send you the whole
‘ in different covers.

‘ The Carnival closed this day last week.

‘ Mr. Hobhouse is still at Rome, I believe. I am
‘ at present a little unwell;—sitting up too late and
‘ some subsidiary dissipations have lowered my blood
‘ a good deal; but I have at present the quiet and
‘ temperance of Lent before me.

‘ Believe me, &c.

‘ P. S. Remember me to Mr. Gifford.—I have not
‘ received your parcel or parcels.—Look into “ Moore’s
‘ (Dr. Moore’s) View of Italy” for me ; in one of the
‘ volumes you will find an account of the *Doge Valiere*
‘ (it ought to be Falieri) and his conspiracy, or the
‘ motives of it. Get it transcribed for me, and send
‘ it in a letter to me soon. I want it, and cannot find
‘ so good an account of that business here ; though
‘ the veiled patriot, and the place where he was
‘ crowned, and afterwards decapitated, still exist and
‘ are shown. I have searched all their histories ; but
‘ the policy of the old aristocracy made their writers
‘ silent on his motives, which were a private grievance
‘ against one of the patricians.

‘ I mean to write a tragedy on the subject, which
‘ appears to me very dramatic : an old man, jealous,
‘ and conspiring against the state of which he was the
‘ actually reigning chief. The last circumstance makes
‘ it the most remarkable and only fact of the kind in
‘ all history of all nations.’

LETTER 263.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *Venice, February 28th, 1817.*

‘ You will, perhaps, complain as much of the fre-
‘ quency of my letters now, as you were wont to do of
‘ their rarity. I think this is the fourth within as many
‘ moons. I feel anxious to hear from you, even more
‘ than usual, because your last indicated that you were
‘ unwell. At present, I am on the invalid regimen
‘ myself. The Carnival—that is, the latter part of it
‘ and sitting up late o’ nights, had knocked me up a
‘ little. But it is over,—and it is now Lent, with all
‘ its abstinence and Sacred Music.

‘ The mumming closed with a masked ball at the

‘ Fenice, where I went, as also to most of the ridottos,
‘ &c. &c. ; and, though I did not dissipate much upon
‘ the whole, yet I find “the sword wearing out the
‘ scabbard,” though I have but just turned the corner
‘ of twenty-nine.

‘ So, we’ll go no more a roving
‘ So late into the night,
‘ Though the heart be still as loving,
‘ And the moon be still as bright.
‘ For the sword out-wears its sheath,
‘ And the soul wears out the breast,
‘ And the heart must pause to breathe,
‘ And Love itself have rest.
‘ Though the night was made for loving,
‘ And the day returns too soon,
‘ Yet we’ll go no more a roving
‘ By the light of the moon.

‘ I have lately had some news of *litteratoor*, as I heard
‘ the editor of the Monthly pronounce it once upon a
‘ time. I hear that W. W. has been publishing and
‘ responding to the attacks of the Quarterly, in the
‘ learned Perry’s Chronicle. I read his poesies last
‘ autumn, and, amongst them, found an epitaph on his
‘ bull-dog, and another on *myself*. But I beg leave to
‘ assure him (like the astrologer Partridge) that I am
‘ not only alive now, but was alive also at the time he
‘ wrote it. Hobhouse has (I hear, also) expectorated
‘ a letter against the Quarterly, addressed to me. I
‘ feel awkwardly situated between him and Gifford,
‘ both being my friends.

‘ And this is your month of going to press—by the
‘ body of Diana ! (a Venetian oath,) I feel as anxious
‘ —but not fearful for you—as if it were myself
‘ coming out in a work of humour, which would, you
‘ know, be the antipodes of all my previous publica-
‘ tions. I don’t think you have anything to dread but

‘ your own reputation. You must keep up to that.
‘ As you never showed me a line of your work, I do
‘ not even know your measure ; but you must send me
‘ a copy by Murray forthwith, and then you shall hear
‘ what I think. I dare say you are in a pucker. Of
‘ all authors, you are the only really *modest* one I ever
‘ met with,—which would sound oddly enough to those
‘ who recollect your morals when you were young—
‘ that is, when you were *extremely* young—I don’t
‘ mean to stigmatise you either with years or mo-
‘ rality.

‘ I believe I told you that the E. R. had attacked
‘ me, in an article on Coleridge (I have not seen it)—
‘ “ *Et tu, Jeffrey?* ”—“ there is nothing but roguery in
‘ villanous man.” But I absolve him of all attacks,
‘ present and future; for I think he had already pushed
‘ his clemency in my behoof to the utmost, and I shall
‘ always think well of him. I only wonder he did not
‘ begin before, as my domestic destruction was a fine
‘ opening for all the world, of which all who could
‘ did well to avail themselves.

‘ If I live ten years longer, you will see, however,
‘ that it is not over with me—I don’t mean in litera-
‘ ture, for that is nothing; and it may seem odd enough
‘ to say, I do not think it my vocation. But you will
‘ see that I shall do something or other—the times
‘ and fortune permitting—that, “like the cosmogony,
‘ or creation of the world, will puzzle the philosophers
‘ of all ages.” But I doubt whether my constitution
‘ will hold out. I have, at intervals, exorcised it most
‘ devilishly.

‘ I have not yet fixed a time of return, but I think of
‘ the spring. I shall have been away a year in April
‘ next. You never mention Rogers, nor Hodgson, your

‘ clerical neighbour, who has lately got a living near
‘ you. Has he also got a child yet?—his desideratum,
‘ when I saw him last,
‘ Pray let me hear from you, at your time and
‘ leisure, believing me ever and truly and affection-
‘ ately, &c.’

LETTER 264.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, March 3rd, 1817.*

‘ In acknowledging the arrival of the article from
‘ the “Quarterly*,” which I received two days ago, I
‘ cannot express myself better than in the words of my
‘ sister Augusta, who (speaking of it) says, that it is
‘ written in a spirit “of the most feeling and kind
‘ nature.” It is, however, something more; it seems
‘ to me (as far as the subject of it may be permitted to
‘ judge) to be *very well* written as a composition, and
‘ I think will do the journal no discredit, because even
‘ those who condemn its partiality must praise its ge-
‘ nerosity. The temptations to take another and a less
‘ favourable view of the question have been so great
‘ and numerous, that, what with public opinion, poli-
‘ tics, &c. he must be a gallant as well as a good man,
‘ who has ventured in that place, and at this time, to
‘ write such an article even anonymously. Such
‘ things are, however, their own reward, and I even
‘ flatter myself that the writer, whoever he may be
‘ (and I have no guess), will not regret that the perusal
‘ of this has given me as much gratification as any
‘ composition of that nature could give, and more than
‘ any other has given,—and I have had a good many

* An Article in No. 31 of this Review, written, as Lord Byron afterwards discovered, by Sir Walter Scott, and well meriting, by the kind and generous spirit that breathes through it, the warm and lasting gratitude it awakened in the noble Poet.

‘ in my time of one kind or the other. It is not the
‘ mere praise, but there is a *tact* and a *delicacy* through-
‘ out, not only with regard to me, but to *others*,
‘ which, as it had not been observed *elsewhere*, I had
‘ till now doubted whether it could be observed *any-*
‘ *where*.

‘ Perhaps some day or other you will know or tell
‘ me the writer’s name. Be assured, had the article
‘ been a harsh one, I should not have asked it.

‘ I have lately written to you frequently, with *ex-*
‘ *tracts*, &c., which I hope you have received, or will
‘ receive, with or before this letter.—Ever since the
‘ conclusion of the Carnival I have been unwell (do
‘ not mention this, on any account, to Mrs. Leigh; for
‘ if I grow worse, she will know it too soon, and if I
‘ get better, there is no occasion that she should know
‘ it at all), and have hardly stirred out of the house.
‘ However, I don’t want a physician, and if I did, very
‘ luckily those of Italy are the worst in the world, so
‘ that I should still have a chance. They have, I be-
‘ lieve, one famous surgeon, Vacca, who lives at Pisa,
‘ who might be useful in case of dissection:—but he
‘ is some hundred miles off. My malady is a sort of
‘ lowish fever, originating from what my “pastor and
‘ master,” Jackson, would call “taking too much out
‘ of one’s self.” However, I am better within this day
‘ or two.

‘ I missed seeing the new Patriarch’s procession to
‘ St. Mark’s the other day (owing to my indisposition),
‘ with six hundred and fifty priests in his rear—a
‘ “goodly army.” The admirable government of
‘ Vienna, in its edict from thence, authorizing his in-
‘ stallation, prescribed, as part of the pageant, “a
‘ *coach* and four horses.” To show how very very

‘ “*German* to the matter” this was, you have only to
‘ suppose our parliament commanding the Archbishop
‘ of Canterbury to proceed from Hyde Park Corner to
‘ St. Paul’s Cathedral in the Lord Mayor’s barge, or
‘ the Margate hoy. There is but St. Marc’s Place in
‘ all Venice broad enough for a carriage to move, and
‘ it is paved with large smooth flag-stones, so that the
‘ chariot and horses of Elijah himself would be puz-
‘ zled to manœuvre upon it. Those of Pharaoh might
‘ do better ; for the canals—and particularly the
‘ Grand Canal—are sufficiently capacious and exten-
‘ sive for his whole host. Of course, no coach could
‘ be attempted ; but the Venetians, who are very naïve
‘ as well as arch, were much amused with the ordi-
‘ nance.

‘ The Armenian Grammar is published ; but my
‘ Armenian studies are suspended for the present till
‘ my head aches a little less. I sent you the other
‘ day, in two covers, the First Act of “*Manfred*,” a
‘ drama as mad as Nat. Lee’s *Bedlam* tragedy, which
‘ was in 25 acts and some odd scenes :—mine is but in
‘ Three Acts.

‘ I find I have begun this letter at the wrong end :
‘ never mind ; I must end it, then, at the right.

‘ Yours ever very truly and obligedly, &c.’

LETTER 265.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, March 9th, 1817.*

‘ In remitting the Third Act of the sort of dramatic
‘ poem of which you will by this time have received
‘ the Two First (at least I hope so), which were sent
‘ within the last three weeks, I have little to observe,
‘ except that you must not publish it (if it ever is
‘ published) without giving me previous notice. I

‘ have really and truly no notion whether it is good or
‘ bad ; and as this was not the case with the principal
‘ of my former publications, I am, therefore, inclined
‘ to rank it very humbly. You will submit it to Mr.
‘ Gifford, and to whomsoever you please besides. With
‘ regard to the question of copyright (if it ever comes
‘ to publication), I do not know whether you would
‘ think *three hundred* guineas an over-estimate ; if you
‘ do, you may diminish it : I do not think it worth more ;
‘ so you may see I make some difference between it
‘ and the others.

‘ I have received your two Reviews (but not the
‘ “ Tales of my Landlord ”) ; the Quarterly I acknow-
‘ ledged particularly to you, on its arrival, ten days
‘ ago. What you tell me of Perry petrifies me ; it is a
‘ rank imposition. In or about February or March,
‘ 1816, I was given to understand that Mr. Croker was
‘ not only a coadjutor in the attacks of the Courier in
‘ 1814, but the author of some lines tolerably fero-
‘ cious, then recently published in a morning paper.
‘ Upon this I wrote a reprisal. The whole of the lines
‘ I have forgotten, and even the purport of them I
‘ scarcely remember ; for on *your* assuring me that he
‘ was not, &c. &c., I put them into the *fire before*
‘ *your face*, and there *never was* but that *one rough* copy.
‘ Mr. Davies, the only person who ever heard them
‘ read, wanted a copy, which I refused. If, however,
‘ by some *impossibility*, which I cannot divine, the
‘ ghost of these rhymes should walk into the world, I
‘ never will deny what I have really written, but hold
‘ myself personally responsible for satisfaction, though
‘ I reserve to myself the right of disavowing all or any
‘ *fabrications*. To the previous facts you are a witness,
‘ and best know how far my recapitulation is correct ;

‘ and I request that you will inform Mr. Perry from
‘ me, that I wonder he should permit such an abuse
‘ of my name in his paper ; I say an *abuse*, because my
‘ absence, at least, demands some respect, and my pre-
‘ sence and positive sanction could alone justify him in
‘ such a proceeding, even were the lines mine; and if
‘ false, there are no words for him. I repeat to you
‘ that the original was burnt before you on your *assur-*
‘ *ance*, and there *never* was a *copy*, nor even a verbal
‘ repetition,—very much to the discomfort of some
‘ zealous Whigs, who bored me for them (having heard
‘ it bruited by Mr. Davies that there were such mat-
‘ ters) to no purpose; for, having written them solely
‘ with the notion that Mr. Croker was the aggressor,
‘ and for *my own* and not party reprisals, I would not
‘ lend me to the zeal of any sect when I was made
‘ aware that he was not the writer of the offensive pas-
‘ sages. *You know*, if there was such a thing, I would
‘ not deny it. I mentioned it openly at the time to
‘ you, and you will remember why and where I de-
‘ stroyed it; and no power nor wheedling on earth
‘ should have made, or could make, me (if I recollected
‘ them) give a copy after that, unless I was well assured
‘ that Mr. Croker was really the author of that which
‘ you assured me he was not.

‘ I intend for England this spring, where I have
‘ some affairs to adjust; but the post hurries me. For
‘ this month past I have been unwell, but am getting
‘ better, and thinking of moving homewards towards
‘ May, without going to Rome, as the unhealthy
‘ season comes on soon, and I can return when I have
‘ settled the business I go upon, which need not be
‘ long. I should have thought the Assyrian tale very
‘ succeedable.

‘ I saw, in Mr. W. W.’s poetry, that he had written
‘ my epitaph ; I would rather have written his.

‘ The thing I have sent you, you will see at a
‘ glimpse, could never be attempted or thought of for
‘ the stage ; I much doubt it for publication even.
‘ It is too much in my old style ; but I composed it
‘ actually with a *horror* of the stage, and with a view
‘ to render the thought of it impracticable, knowing
‘ the zeal of my friends that I should try that for which
‘ I have an invincible repugnance, viz. a representa-
‘ tion.

‘ I certainly am a devil of a mannerist, and must
‘ leave off ; but what could I do ? Without exertion
‘ of some kind, I should have sunk under my imagina-
‘ tion and reality. My best respects to Mr. Gifford,
‘ to Walter Scott, and to all friends.

‘ Yours ever.’

LETTER 266.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *Venice, March 10th, 1817.*

‘ I wrote again to you lately, but I hope you
‘ won’t be sorry to have another epistle. I have been
‘ unwell this last month, with a kind of slow and low
‘ fever, which fixes upon me at night, and goes off in
‘ the morning ; but, however, I am now better. In
‘ spring it is probable we may meet ; at least I intend
‘ for England, where I have business, and hope to
‘ meet you in *your* restored health and additional
‘ laurels.

‘ Murray has sent me the Quarterly and the Edin-
‘ burgh. When I tell you that Walter Scott is the
‘ author of the article in the former, you will agree
‘ with me that such an article is still more honourable
‘ to him than to myself. I am perfectly pleased with

‘ Jeffrey’s also, which I wish you to tell him, with my
‘ remembrances—not that I suppose it is of any conse-
‘ quence to him, or ever could have been, whether I
‘ am pleased or not, but simply in my private relation
‘ to him, as his well-wisher, and it may be one day as
‘ his acquaintance. . I wish you would also add, what
‘ you know, that I was not, and, indeed, am not even
‘ *now*, the misanthropical and gloomy gentleman he
‘ takes me for, but a facetious companion, well to do
‘ with those with whom I am intimate, and as loqua-
‘ cious and laughing as if I were a much cleverer
‘ fellow.

‘ I suppose now I shall never be able to shake off
‘ my sables in public imagination, more particularly
‘ since my moral * * clove down my fame. However,
‘ nor that, nor more than that, has yet extinguished my
‘ spirit, which always rises with the rebound. .

‘ At Venice we are in Lent, and I have not lately
‘ moved out of doors, my feverishness requiring quiet,
‘ and—by way of being more quiet—here is the
‘ Signora Marianna just come in and seated at my
‘ elbow.

‘ Have you seen * * *’s book of poesy? and, if you
‘ have seen it, are you not delighted with it? And have
‘ you—I really cannot go on: There is a pair of great
‘ black eyes looking over my shoulder, like the angel
‘ leaning over St. Matthew’s, in the old frontispieces
‘ to the Evangelists,—so that I must turn and answer
‘ them instead of you. Ever, &c.’

LETTER 267.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *Venice, March 25th, 1817.*

‘ I have at last learned, in default of your own
‘ writing (or *not* writing—which should it be? for I

‘ am not very clear as to the application of the word
 ‘ *default*) from Murray, two particulars of (or belonging
 ‘ to) you; one, that you are removing to Hornsey,
 ‘ which is, I presume, to be nearer London; and the
 ‘ other, that your Poem is announced by the name of
 ‘ Lalla Rookh. I am glad of it,—first, that we are to
 ‘ have it at last, and next, I like a tough title myself—
 ‘ witness the Giaour and Childe Harold, which choked
 ‘ half the Blues at starting. Besides, it is the tail
 ‘ of Alcibiades’s dog,—not that I suppose you want
 ‘ either dog or tail. Talking of tail, I wish you had not
 ‘ called it a “*Persian Tale**.” Say a “Poem” or
 ‘ “Romance,” but not “Tale.” I am very sorry that
 ‘ I called some of my own things “Tales,” because I
 ‘ think that they are something better. Besides, we
 ‘ have had Arabian, and Hindoo, and Turkish, and
 ‘ Assyrian Tales. But, after all, this is frivolous in
 ‘ me; you won’t, however, mind my nonsense.

‘ Really and truly, I want you to make a great hit,
 ‘ if only out of self-love, because we happen to be old
 ‘ cronies; and I have no doubt you will—I am sure
 ‘ you *can*. But you are, I’ll be sworn, in a devil of a
 ‘ pucker; and *I am not* at your elbow, and Rogers *is*.
 ‘ I envy him; which is not fair, because he does not
 ‘ envy anybody. Mind you send to me—that is, make
 ‘ Murray send—the moment you are forth.

‘ I have been very ill with a slow fever, which at
 ‘ last took to flying, and became as quick as need

* He had been misinformed on this point,—the work in question having been, from the first, entitled an ‘Oriental Romance.’ A much worse mistake (because wilful, and with no very charitable design) was that of certain persons, who would have it that the Poem was meant to be Epic!—Even Mr. D’Israeli has, for the sake of a theory, given in to this very gratuitous assumption:—‘The Anacreontic poet (he says) remains only Anacreontic in his Epic.’

‘ be*. But, at length, after a week of half-delirium,
 ‘ burning skin, thirst, hot headache, horrible pulsation,
 ‘ and no sleep, by the blessing of barley water, and
 ‘ refusing to see any physician, I recovered. It is an
 ‘ epidemic of the place, which is annual, and visits
 ‘ strangers. Here follow some versicles, which I made
 ‘ one sleepless night.

‘ I read the “Christabel;”
 ‘ Very well :
 ‘ I read the “Missionary;”
 ‘ Pretty—very :
 ‘ I tried at “Ilderim;”
 ‘ Ahem ;
 ‘ I read a sheet of “Marg’ret of Anjou;”
 ‘ Can you ?
 ‘ I turn’d a page of “**’s Waterloo;”
 ‘ Pooh! pooh!
 ‘ I look’d at Wordsworth’s milk-white “Rylstone Doe :”
 ‘ Hillo!
 ‘ &c. &c. &c.’

‘ I have not the least idea where I am going, nor
 ‘ what I am to do. I wished to have gone to Rome ;
 ‘ but at present it is pestilent with English,—a parcel
 ‘ of staring boobies, who go about gaping and wishing
 ‘ to be at once cheap and magnificent. A man is a
 ‘ fool who travels now in France or Italy, till this
 ‘ tribe of wretches is swept home again. In two or
 ‘ three years the first rush will be over, and the Con-
 ‘ tinent will be roomy and agreeable.

‘ I stayed at Venice chiefly because it is not one of
 ‘ their “dens of thieves;” and here they but pause
 ‘ and pass. In Switzerland it was really noxious.

* In a note to Mr. Murray, subjoined to some corrections for *Manfred*, he says, ‘ Since I wrote to you last, the *slow* fever I wot of thought proper to mend its pace, and became similar to one which I caught some years ago in the marshes of Elis, in the Morea.’

‘ Luckily, I was early, and had got the prettiest place
‘ on all the Lake before they were quickened into
‘ motion with the rest of the reptiles. But they crossed
‘ me everywhere. I met a family of children and
‘ old women half-way up the Wengen Alp (by the
‘ Jungfrau) upon mules, some of them too old and
‘ others too young to be the least aware of what they
‘ saw.

‘ By the way, I think the Jungfrau, and all that
‘ region of Alps, which I traversed in September—
‘ going to the very top of the Wengen, which is not
‘ the highest (the Jungfrau itself is inaccessible) but
‘ the best point of view—much finer than Mont-Blanc
‘ and Chamouni, or the Simplon. I kept a journal of
‘ the whole for my sister Augusta, part of which she
‘ copied and let Murray see.

‘ I wrote a sort of mad Drama, for the sake of intro-
‘ ducing the Alpine scenery in description ; and this I
‘ sent lately to Murray. Almost all the *dram. pers.*
‘ are spirits, ghosts, or magicians, and the scene is in
‘ the Alps and the other world, so you may suppose
‘ what a Bedlam tragedy it must be : make him show
‘ it you. I sent him all three acts piecemeal, by the
‘ post, and suppose they have arrived.

‘ I have now written to you at least six letters, or
‘ letterets, and all I have received in return is a note
‘ about the length you used to write from Bury-street
‘ to St. James’s-street, when we used to dine with
‘ Rogers, and talk laxly, and go to parties, and hear
‘ poor Sheridan now and then. Do you remember
‘ one night he was so tipsy that I was forced to put
‘ his cocked hat on for him,—for he could not,—and I
‘ let him down at Brookes’s, much as he must since
‘ have been let down into his grave. Heigh ho! I

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‘ wish I was drunk—but I have nothing but this d—d
‘ barley-water before me.

‘ I am still in love,—which is a dreadful drawback
‘ in quitting a place, and I can’t stay at Venice much
‘ longer. What I shall do on this point I don’t know.
‘ The girl means to go with me, but I do not like this
‘ for her own sake. I have had so many conflicts in my
‘ own mind on this subject, that I am not at all sure
‘ they did not help me to the fever I mentioned above.
‘ I am certainly very much attached to her, and I have
‘ cause to be so, if you knew all. But she has a child;
‘ and though, like all the “children of the sun,” she
‘ consults nothing but passion, it is necessary I should
‘ think for both; and it is only the virtuous, like ****,
‘ who can afford to give up husband and child, and
‘ live happy ever after.

‘ The Italian ethics are the most singular ever met
‘ with. The perversion, not only of action, but of
‘ reasoning, is singular in the women. It is not that
‘ they do not consider the thing itself as wrong, and
‘ very wrong, but *love* (the *sentiment* of love) is not
‘ merely an excuse for it, but makes it an *actual virtue*,
‘ provided it is disinterested, and not a *caprice*, and is
‘ confined to one object. They have awful notions of
‘ constancy; for I have seen some ancient figures of
‘ eighty pointed out as *Amorosi* of forty, fifty, and
‘ sixty years standing. I can’t say I have ever seen
‘ a husband and wife so coupled.

‘ Ever, &c.

‘ P.S. Marianna, to whom I have just translated
‘ what I have written on our subject to you, says—
‘ “If you loved me thoroughly, you would not make
‘ so many fine reflections, which are only good *for-*
‘ *birsi i scarpi*,”—that is, “to clean shoes withal,”—a

‘ Venetian proverb of appreciation, which is applicable
‘ to reasoning of all kinds.’

LETTER 268.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, March 25th, 1817.*

‘ Your letter and inclosure are safe ; but “ English
‘ gentlemen ” are very rare—at least in Venice. I
‘ doubt whether there are at present any, save the
‘ consul and vice-consul, with neither of whom I
‘ have the slightest acquaintance. The moment I can
‘ pounce upon a witness, I will send the deed properly
‘ signed: but must he necessarily be genteel? Venice
‘ is not a place where the English are gregarious ;
‘ their pigeon-houses are Florence, Naples, Rome, &c. ;
‘ and to tell you the truth, this was one reason why I
‘ stayed here till the season of the purgation of Rome
‘ from these people, which is infected with them at this
‘ time, should arrive. Besides, I abhor the nation and
‘ the nation me ; it is impossible for me to describe my
‘ *own* sensation on that point, but it may suffice to say,
‘ that, if I met with any of the race in the beautiful
‘ parts of Switzerland, the most distant glimpse or
‘ aspect of them poisoned the whole scene, and I do
‘ not choose to have the Pantheon, and St. Peter’s, and
‘ the Capitol, spoiled for me too. This feeling may
‘ be probably owing to recent events ; but it does
‘ not exist the less, and while it exists, I shall con-
‘ ceal it as little as any other.

‘ I have been seriously ill with a fever, but it is
‘ gone. I believe or suppose it was the indigenous
‘ fever of the place, which comes every year at this
‘ time, and of which the physicians change the name
‘ annually, to despatch the people sooner. It is a
‘ kind of typhus, and kills occasionally. It was pretty

‘ smart, but nothing particular, and has left me some
‘ debility and a great appetite. There are a good
‘ many ill at present, I suppose, of the same.

‘ I feel sorry for Horner, if there was anything in
‘ the world to make him like it; and still more sorry
‘ for his friends, as there was much to make them
‘ regret him. I had not heard of his death till by your
‘ letter.

‘ Some weeks ago I wrote to you my acknowledg-
‘ ments of Walter Scott’s article. Now I know it to
‘ be his, it cannot add to my good opinion of him, but
‘ it adds to that of myself. *He*, and Gifford, and
‘ Moore, are the only *regulars* I ever knew who had
‘ nothing of the *garrison* about their manner: no non-
‘ sense, nor affectations, look you! As for the rest
‘ whom I have known, there was always more or less
‘ of the author about them—the pen peeping from
‘ behind the ear, and the thumbs a little inky, or so.

‘ “Lalla Rookh”—you must recollect that, in the
‘ way of title, the “*Giaour*” has never been pro-
‘ nounced to this day; and both it and Childe Harold
‘ sounded very facetious to the blue-bottles of wit and
‘ humour about town, till they were taught and startled
‘ into a proper deportment; and therefore Lalla Rookh,
‘ which is very orthodox and oriental, is as good a
‘ a title as need be, if not better. I could wish rather
‘ that he had not called it “a *Persian Tale*,” firstly,
‘ because we have had Turkish Tales, and Hindoo
‘ Tales, and Assyrian Tales, already; and *tale* is a
‘ word of which it repents me to have nicknamed poesy.
‘ “Fable” would be better; and, secondly, “Persian
‘ Tale” reminds one of the lines of Pope on Ambrose
‘ Phillips; though no one can say, to be sure, that
‘ this tale has been “turned for half-a-crown;” still

‘ it is as well to avoid such clashings. “ Persian
 ‘ *Story*”—why not?—or Romance? I feel as anxious
 ‘ for Moore as I could do for myself, for the soul of
 ‘ me, and I would not have him succeed otherwise
 ‘ than splendidly, which I trust he will do.

‘ With regard to the “Witch Drama,” I sent all
 ‘ the three acts by post, week after week, within this
 ‘ last month. I repeat that I have not an idea if it is
 ‘ good or bad. If bad, it must, on no account, be
 ‘ risked in publication; if good, it is at your service.
 ‘ I value it at *three hundred* guineas, or less, if you
 ‘ like it. Perhaps, if published, the best way will be
 ‘ to add it to your winter volume, and not publish
 ‘ separately. The price will show you I don’t pique
 ‘ myself upon it; so speak out. You may put it in
 ‘ the fire, if you like, and Gifford don’t like.

‘ The Armenian Grammar is published—that is,
 ‘ *one*; the other is still in MS. My illness has pre-
 ‘ vented me from moving this month past, and I have
 ‘ done nothing more with the Armenian.

‘ Of Italian or rather Lombard manners, I could
 ‘ tell you little or nothing: I went two or three times
 ‘ to the governor’s conversazione (and if you go once,
 ‘ you are free to go always), at which, as I only saw
 ‘ very plain women, a formal circle, in short a *worst*
 ‘ *sort* of rout, I did not go again. I went to Academie
 ‘ and to Madame Albrizzi’s, where I saw pretty much
 ‘ the same thing, with the addition of some literati,
 ‘ who are the same *blue**, by —, all the world over.
 ‘ I fell in love the first week with Madame **, and I
 ‘ have continued so ever since, because she is very

* Whenever a word or passage occurs (as in this instance) which Lord Byron would have pronounced emphatically in speaking, it appears, in his handwriting, as if written with something of the same vehemence.

‘ pretty and pleasing, and talks Venetian, which
 ‘ amuses me, and is naïve.

‘ Very truly, &c.

‘ P.S. Pray send the red tooth-powder by a *safe*
 ‘ *hand*, and speedily*.

‘ To hook the reader, you, John Murray,
 ‘ Have publish’d “Anjou’s Margaret,”
 ‘ Which won’t be sold off in a hurry
 ‘ (At least, it has not been as yet);
 ‘ And then, still further to bewilder ’em,
 ‘ Without remorse you set up “Ilderim;”
 ‘ So mind you don’t get into debt,
 ‘ Because as how, if you should fail,
 ‘ These books would be but baddish bail.
 ‘ And mind you do *not* let escape
 ‘ These rhymes to Morning Post or Perry,
 ‘ Which would be *very* treacherous—*very*,
 ‘ And get me into such a scrape!
 ‘ For, firstly, I should have to sally,
 ‘ All in my little boat, against a *Gally*;
 ‘ And, should I chance to slay the Assyrian wight,
 ‘ Have next to combat with the female knight.

‘ You may show these matters to Moore and the
 ‘ *select*, but not to the *profane*; and tell Moore, that
 ‘ I wonder he don’t write to one now and then.’

LETTER 269.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *Venice, March 31st, 1817.*

‘ You will begin to think my epistolary offerings
 ‘ (to whatever altar you please to devote them) rather
 ‘ prodigal. But, until you answer, I shall not abate,
 ‘ because you deserve no better. I know you are well,
 ‘ because I hear of your voyaging to London and the
 ‘ environs, which I rejoice to learn, because your note

* Here follow the same rhymes (‘ I read the Christabel,’ &c.) which have already been given in one of his letters to myself.

‘ alarmed me by the purgation and phlebotomy therein
‘ prognosticated. I also hear of your being in the
‘ press; all which, methinks, might have furnished
‘ you with subject matter for a middle-sized letter,
‘ considering that I am in foreign parts, and that
‘ the last month’s advertisements and obituary would
‘ be absolute news to me from your Tramontane
‘ country.

‘ I told you, in my last, I have had a smart fever.
‘ There is an epidemic in the place; but I suspect,
‘ from the symptoms, that mine was a fever of my own,
‘ and had nothing in common with the low, vulgar
‘ typhus, which is at this moment decimating Venice,
‘ and which has half unpeopled Milan, if the accounts
‘ be true. This malady has sorely discomfited my
‘ serving men, who want sadly to be gone away, and
‘ get me to remove. But, besides my natural per-
‘ versity, I was seasoned in Turkey, by the continual
‘ whispers of the plague, against apprehensions of
‘ contagion. Besides which, apprehension would not
‘ prevent it; and then I am still in love, and “forty
‘ thousand” fevers should not make me stir before my
‘ minute, while under the influence of that paramount
‘ delirium. Seriously speaking, there is a malady
‘ rife in the city—a dangerous one, they say. How-
‘ ever, mine did not appear so, though it was not plea-
‘ sant.

‘ This is passion-week—and twilight—and all the
‘ world are at vespers. They have an eternal church-
‘ ing, as in all catholic countries, but are not so bigoted
‘ as they seem to be in Spain.

‘ I don’t know whether to be glad or sorry that you
‘ are leaving Mayfield. Had I ever been at Newstead
‘ during your stay there (except during the winter of

‘ 1813-14, when the roads were impracticable), we
‘ should have been within hail, and I should like to
‘ have made a giro of the Peak with you. I know that
‘ country well, having been all over it when a boy.
‘ Was you ever in Dovedale? I can assure you there
‘ are things in Derbyshire as noble as Greece or
‘ Switzerland. But you had always a lingering after
‘ London, and I don’t wonder at it. I liked it as well
‘ as anybody, myself, now and then.

‘ Will you remember me to Rogers? whom I pre-
‘ sume to be flourishing, and whom I regard as our
‘ poetical papa. You are his lawful son, and I the
‘ illegitimate. Has he begun yet upon Sheridan? If
‘ you see our republican friend, Leigh Hunt, pray
‘ present my remembrances. I saw about nine months
‘ ago that he was in a row (like my friend Hobhouse)
‘ with the Quarterly Reviewers. For my part, I never
‘ could understand these quarrels of authors with cri-
‘ tics and with one another. “For God’s sake, gentle-
‘ men, what do they mean?”

‘ What think you of your countryman, Maturin? I
‘ take some credit to myself for having done my best
‘ to bring out Bertram; but I must say my colleagues
‘ were quite as ready and willing. Walter Scott,
‘ however, was the *first* who mentioned him, which he
‘ did to me, with great commendation, in 1815; and
‘ it is to this casualty, and two or three other acci-
‘ dents, that this very clever fellow owed his first and
‘ well-merited public success. What a chance is
‘ fame!

‘ Did I tell you that I have translated two Epis-
‘ tles?—a correspondence between St. Paul and the
‘ Corinthians, not to be found in our version, but
‘ the Armenian—but which seems to me very ortho-

‘dox, and I have done it into scriptural prose
 ‘English*.’ ‘Ever, &c.’

LETTER 270.

TO MR. MURRAY.

Venice, April 2d, 1817.

‘I sent you the whole of the Drama at *three several*
 ‘times, act by act, in separate covers. I hope that
 ‘you have, or will receive, some or the whole of it.

‘So Love has a conscience. By Diana! I shall
 ‘make him take back the box, though it were Pandora’s.
 ‘The discovery of its intrinsic silver occurred on send-
 ‘ing it to have the lid adapted to admit Marianna’s
 ‘portrait. Of course I had the box remitted *in statu*
 ‘*quo*, and had the picture set in another, which suits
 ‘it (the picture) very well. The defaulting box is not
 ‘touched, hardly, and was not in the man’s hands
 ‘above an hour.

‘I am aware of what you say of Otway; and am a
 ‘very great admirer of his,—all except of that maudlin
 ‘b—h of chaste lewdness and blubbering curiosity,
 ‘Belvidera, whom I utterly despise, abhor, and detest.

* The only plausible claim of these Epistles to authenticity arises from the circumstance of St. Paul having (according to the opinion of Mosheim and others) written an Epistle to the Corinthians, before that which we now call his first. They are, however, universally given up as spurious. Though frequently referred to as existing in the Armenian, by Primate Usher, Johan. Gregorius, and other learned men, they were for the first time, I believe, translated from that language by the two Whistons, who subjoined the correspondence, with a Greek and Latin version, to their edition of the Armenian History of Moses of Chorene, published in 1736.

The translation by Lord Byron is, as far as I can learn, the first that has ever been attempted in English; and as, proceeding from *his* pen, it must possess, of course, additional interest, the reader will not be displeased to find it in the Appendix. Annexed to the copy in my possession are the following words, in his own handwriting:—‘Done into
 ‘English by me, January, February, 1817, at the Convent of San Lazaro,
 ‘with the aid and exposition of the Armenian text by the Father Paschal
 ‘Aucher, Armenian friar.—BYRON. I had also (he adds) the Latin
 ‘text, but it is in many places very corrupt, and with great omissions.’

‘ But the story of Marino Faliero is different, and, I
‘ think, so much finer, that I wish Otway had taken it
‘ instead : the head conspiring against the body for
‘ refusal of redress for a real injury,—jealousy,—treason,—with the more fixed and inveterate passions
‘ (mixed with policy) of an old or elderly man—the
‘ devil himself could not have a finer subject, and he
‘ is your only tragic dramatist.

‘ There is still, in the Doge’s palace, the black veil
‘ painted over Faliero’s picture, and the staircase
‘ whereon he was first crowned Doge, and subsequently decapitated. This was the thing that most
‘ struck my imagination in Venice—more than the
‘ Rialto, which I visited for the sake of Shylock; and
‘ more, too, than Schiller’s “*Armenian*,” a novel which
‘ took a great hold of me when a boy. It is also
‘ called the “*Ghost Seer*,” and I never walked down
‘ St. Mark’s by moonlight without thinking of it, and
‘ “at nine o’clock he died!”—But I hate things *all fiction*;
‘ and therefore the *Merchant* and *Othello* have no
‘ great associations to me: but *Pierre* has. There
‘ should always be some foundation of fact for the most
‘ airy fabric, and pure invention is but the talent of a
‘ liar.

‘ Maturin’s tragedy.—By your account of him last
‘ year to me, he seemed a bit of a coxcomb, personally.
‘ Poor fellow! to be sure, he had had a long seasoning
‘ of adversity, which is not so hard to bear as t’other
‘ thing. I hope that this won’t throw him back into
‘ the “*slough of Despond*.”

‘ You talk of “*marriage* ;”—ever since my own
‘ funeral, the word makes me giddy, and throws me
‘ into a cold sweat. Pray, don’t repeat it.

‘ You should close with Madame de Staël. This

‘ will be her best work, and permanently historical ; it
 ‘ is on her father, the Revolution, and Buonaparte, &c.
 ‘ Bonstetten told me in Switzerland it was *very great*.
 ‘ I have not seen it myself, but the author often. She
 ‘ was very kind to me at Copet.

‘ There have been two articles in the Venice papers,
 ‘ one a Review of Glenarvon * * * *, and the other a
 ‘ Review of Childe Harold, in which it proclaims me
 ‘ the most rebellious and contumacious admirer of
 ‘ Buonaparte now surviving in Europe. Both these
 ‘ articles are translations from the Literary Gazette of
 ‘ German Jena.

‘ Tell me that Walter Scott is better. I would not
 ‘ have him ill for the world. I suppose it was by sym-
 ‘ pathy that I had my fever at the same time.

‘ I joy in the success of your Quarterly, but I must
 ‘ still stick by the Edinburgh ; Jeffrey has done so
 ‘ by me, I must say, through everything, and this is
 ‘ more than I deserved from him. I have more than
 ‘ once acknowledged to you by letter the “ Article ”
 ‘ (and articles) ; say that you have received the said
 ‘ letters, as I do not otherwise know what letters arrive.
 ‘ Both Reviews came, but nothing more. M.’s play
 ‘ and the extract not yet come.

‘ Write to say whether my Magician has arrived,
 ‘ with all his scenes, spells, &c. Yours ever, &c.

‘ It is useless to send to the *Foreign-office* : nothing
 ‘ arrives to me by that conveyance. I suppose some
 ‘ zealous clerk thinks it a Tory duty to prevent it.’

LETTER 271.

TO MR. ROGERS.

‘ *Venice, April 4th, 1817.*

‘ It is a considerable time since I wrote to you
 ‘ last, and I hardly know why I should trouble you now,

‘ except that I think you will not be sorry to hear from
‘ me now and then. You and I were never correspon-
‘ dents, but always something better, which is, very
‘ good friends.

‘ I saw your friend Sharp in Switzerland, or rather
‘ in the German *territory* (which is and is not Switzer-
‘ land), and he gave Hobhouse and me a very good
‘ route for the Bernese Alps; however, we took an-
‘ other from a German, and went by Clarens, the Dent
‘ de Jaman to Montbovon, and through Simmenthal to
‘ Thoun, and so on to Lauterbrounn; except that from
‘ thence to the Grindelwald, instead of round about, we
‘ went right over the Wengen Alps’ very summit, and
‘ being close under the Jungfrau, saw it, its glaciers,
‘ and heard the avalanches in all their glory, having
‘ famous weather therefor. We of course went from
‘ the Grindelwald over the Scheideck to Brienz and
‘ its lake; past the Reichenbach and all that moun-
‘ tain road, which reminded me of Albania and Ætolia
‘ and Greece, except that the people here were more
‘ civilized and rascally. I do not think so very much
‘ of Chamouni (except the source of the Arveron, to
‘ which we went up to the teeth of the ice, so as to
‘ look into and touch the cavity, against the warning of
‘ the guides, only one of whom would go with us so
‘ close) as of the Jungfrau, and the Pissevache, and
‘ Simplon, which are quite out of all mortal competi-
‘ tion.

‘ I was at Milan about a moon, and saw Monti and
‘ some other living curiosities, and thence on to Verona,
‘ where I did not forget your story of the assassination
‘ during your sojourn there, and brought away with
‘ me some fragments of Juliet’s tomb, and a lively re-
‘ collection of the amphitheatre. The Countess Goetz

‘ (the governor’s wife here) told me that there is still a
‘ ruined castle of the Montecchi between Verona and
‘ Vicenza. I have been at Venice since November, but
‘ shall proceed to Rome shortly. For my deeds here,
‘ are they not written in my letters to the unreplying
‘ Thomas Moore? to him I refer you: he has received
‘ them all, and not answered one.

‘ Will you remember me to Lord and Lady Holland?
‘ I have to thank the former for a book which I have
‘ not yet received, but expect to reperuse with great
‘ pleasure on my return, viz. the 2d edition of Lope de
‘ Vega. I have heard of Moore’s forthcoming poem:
‘ he cannot wish himself more success than I wish and
‘ augur for him. I have also heard great things of
‘ “Tales of my Landlord,” but I have not yet received
‘ them; by all accounts they beat even Waverley, &c.,
‘ and are by the same author. Maturin’s second tra-
‘ gedy has, it seems, failed, for which I should think
‘ anybody would be sorry. My health was very vic-
‘ torious till within the last month, when I had a fever.
‘ There is a typhus in these parts, but I don’t think it
‘ was that. However, I got well without a physician
‘ or drugs.

‘ I forgot to tell you that, last autumn, I furnished
‘ Lewis with “bread and salt” for some days at Dio-
‘ dati, in reward for which (besides his conversation)
‘ he translated “Goëthe’s Faust” to me by word of
‘ mouth, and I set him by the ears with Madame de
‘ Staël about the slave trade. I am indebted for many
‘ and kind courtesies to our Lady of Copet, and I now
‘ love her as much as I always did her works, of which
‘ I was and am a great admirer. When are you to
‘ begin with Sheridan? what are you doing, and how
‘ do you do? Ever very truly, &c.’

LETTER 272.

TO MR. MURRAY.

Venice, April 9th, 1817.

‘ Your letters of the 18th and 20th are arrived.
‘ In my own I have given you the rise, progress, de-
‘ cline, and fall, of my recent malady. It is gone to
‘ the devil: I won’t pay him so bad a compliment as to
‘ say it came from him;—he is too much of a gentle-
‘ man. It was nothing but a slow fever, which quick-
‘ ened its pace towards the end of its journey. I had
‘ been bored with it some weeks—with nocturnal burn-
‘ ings and morning perspirations; but I am quite well
‘ again, which I attribute to having had neither medi-
‘ cine nor doctor thereof.

‘ In a few days I set off for Rome: such is my pur-
‘ pose. I shall change it very often before Monday
‘ next, but do you continue to direct and address to
‘ *Venice*, as heretofore. If I go, letters will be for-
‘ warded: I say “*if*,” because I never know what I
‘ shall do till it is done; and as I mean most firmly to
‘ set out for Rome, it is not unlikely I may find myself
‘ at St. Petersburg.

‘ You tell me to “take care of myself;”—faith, and
‘ I will. I won’t be posthumous yet, if I can help it.
‘ Notwithstanding, only think what a “Life and Ad-
‘ ventures,” while I am in full scandal, would be worth,
‘ together with the “*membra*” of my writing-desk,
‘ the sixteen beginnings of poems never to be finished!
‘ Do you think I would not have shot myself last year,
‘ had I not luckily recollected that Mrs. C** and Lady
‘ N**, and all the old women in England would have
‘ been delighted;—besides the agreeable “Lunacy,”
‘ of the “Crown’s Quest,” and the regrets of two or
‘ three or half a dozen? Be assured that I *would live*
‘ for two reasons, or more;—there are one or two peo-

‘ ple whom I have to put out of the world, and as
‘ many into it, before I can “depart in peace;” if I do
‘ so before, I have not fulfilled my mission. Besides,
‘ when I turn thirty, I will turn devout; I feel a great
‘ vocation that way in Catholic churches, and when I
‘ hear the organ.

‘ So ** is writing again! Is there no Bedlam in
‘ Scotland? nor thumb-screw? nor gag? nor handcuff?
‘ I went upon my knees to him almost, some years
‘ ago, to prevent him from publishing a political
‘ pamphlet, which would have given him a livelier
‘ idea of “Habeas Corpus” than the world will derive
‘ from his present production upon that suspended
‘ subject, which will doubtless be followed by the
‘ suspension of other of his majesty’s subjects.

‘ I condole with Drury-lane and rejoice with **,—
‘ that is, in a modest way,—on the tragical end of the
‘ new tragedy.

‘ You and Leigh Hunt have quarrelled then, it
‘ seems? I introduce him and his poem to you, in
‘ the hope that (malgré politics) the union would be
‘ beneficial to both, and the end is eternal enmity;
‘ and yet I did this with the best intentions: I intro-
‘ duce ***, and *** runs away with your money: my
‘ friend Hobhouse quarrels, too, with the Quarterly:
‘ and (except the last) I am the innocent Isthmus
‘ (damn the word! I can’t spell it, though I have
‘ crossed that of Corinth a dozen times) of these
‘ enmities.

‘ I will tell you something about Chillon.—A Mr.
‘ *De Luc*, ninety years old, a Swiss, had it read to him,
‘ and is pleased with it,—so my sister writes. He
‘ said that he was *with Rousseau* at *Chillon*, and that
‘ the description is perfectly correct. But this is not

‘ all: I recollected something of the name, and find
‘ the following passage in “The Confessions,” vol. iii.,
‘ page 247, liv. viii.

‘ “De tous ces amusemens celui qui me plût davant-
‘ age fut une promenade autour du Lac, que je fis en
‘ bateau avec *De Luc* père, sa bru, ses *deux fils*, et ma
‘ Thérèse. Nous mîmes sept jours à cette tournée par
‘ le plus beau temps du monde. J’en gardai le vif
‘ souvenir des sites qui m’avoient frappé à l’autre ex-
‘ tremité du Lac, et dont je fis la description, quelques
‘ années après, dans la Nouvelle Heloise.”

‘ This nonagenarian, De Luc, must be one of the
‘ “deux fils.” He is in England—infirm, but still in
‘ faculty. It is odd that he should have lived so long,
‘ and not wanting in oddness, that he should have
‘ made this voyage with Jean Jacques, and afterwards,
‘ at such an interval, read a poem by an Englishman
‘ (who had made precisely the same circumnavigation)
‘ upon the same scenery.

‘ As for “Manfred,” it is of no use sending *proofs* ;
‘ nothing of that kind comes. I sent the whole at dif-
‘ ferent times. The two first Acts are the best ; the
‘ third so so ; but I was blown with the first and second
‘ heats. You must call it “a Poem,” for it is *no*
‘ *Drama*, and I do not choose to have it called by so
‘ * * a name—a “Poem in dialogue,” or—Pantomime,
‘ if you will ; anything but a green-room synonyme ;
‘ and this is your motto—

‘ There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
‘ Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

‘ Yours ever, &c.

‘ My love and thanks to Mr. Gifford.’

LETTER 273.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ Venice, April 11th, 1817. ’

‘ I shall continue to write to you while the fit is
‘ on me, by way of penance upon you for your former
‘ complaints of long silence. I dare say you would
‘ blush, if you could, for not answering. Next week I
‘ set out for Rome. Having seen Constantinople, I
‘ should like to look at t’other fellow. Besides, I want
‘ to see the Pope, and shall take care to tell him that
‘ I vote for the Catholics and no Veto.

‘ I sha’n’t go to Naples. It is but the second best
‘ sea-view, and I have seen the first and third, viz.—
‘ Constantinople and Lisbon (by the way, the last is
‘ but a river-view; however, they reckon it after
‘ Stamboul and Naples, and before Genoa), and Vesu-
‘ vius is silent, and I have passed by Ætna. So I
‘ shall e’en return to Venice in July; and if you write,
‘ I pray you to address to Venice, which is my head,
‘ or rather my *heart*-quarters.

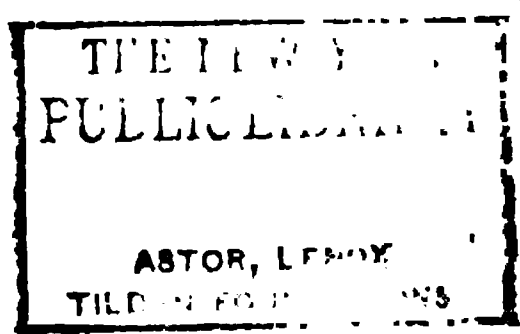
‘ My late physician, Doctor Polidori, is here, on his
‘ way to England, with the present Lord G ** and the
‘ widow of the late earl. Doctor Polidori has, just
‘ now, no more patients, because his patients are no
‘ more. He had lately three, who are now all dead—
‘ one embalmed. Horner and a child of Thomas
‘ Hope’s are interred at Pisa and Rome. Lord G **
‘ died of an inflammation of the bowels; so they took
‘ them out, and sent them (on account of their discre-
‘ pancies), separately from the carcass, to England.
‘ Conceive a man going one way, and his intestines
‘ another, and his immortal soul a third!—was there
‘ ever such a distribution? One certainly has a soul;
‘ but how it came to allow itself to be enclosed in a
‘ body is more than I can imagine. I only know if

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‘ once mine gets out, I’ll have a bit of a tustle before
‘ I let it get in again to that or any other.

‘ And so poor dear Mr. Maturin’s second tragedy
‘ has been neglected by the discerning public. * *
‘ will be d—d glad of this, and d—d without being
‘ glad, if ever his own plays come upon “any stage.”

‘ I wrote to Rogers the other day, with a message
‘ for you. I hope that he flourishes. He is the
‘ Tithonus of poetry—immortal already. You and I
‘ must wait for it.

‘ I hear nothing—know nothing. You may easily
‘ suppose that the English don’t seek me, and I avoid
‘ them. To be sure, there are but few or none here,
‘ save passengers. Florence and Naples are their
‘ Margate and Ramsgate, and much the same sort of
‘ company too, by all accounts, which hurts us among
‘ the Italians.

‘ I want to hear of Lalla Rookh—are you out?
‘ Death and fiends! why don’t you tell me where you
‘ are, what you are, and how you are? I shall go to
‘ Bologna by Ferrara, instead of Mantua: because I
‘ would rather see the cell where they caged Tasso,
‘ and where he became mad and * *, than his own
‘ MSS. at Modena, or the Mantuan birthplace of that
‘ harmonious plagiary and miserable flatterer, whose
‘ cursed hexameters were drilled into me at Harrow.
‘ I saw Verona and Vicenza on my way here—Padua
‘ too.

‘ I go *alone*,—but *alone*, because I mean to return
‘ here. I only want to see Rome. I have not the
‘ least curiosity about Florence, though I must see it
‘ for the sake of the Venus, &c. &c.; and I wish also
‘ to see the Fall of Terni. I think to return to Venice
‘ by Ravenna and Rimini, of both of which I mean to

‘ take notes for Leigh Hunt, who will be glad to hear
 ‘ of the scenery of his Poem. There was a devil of a
 ‘ review of him in the Quarterly, a year ago, which he
 ‘ answered. All answers are imprudent; but, to be
 ‘ sure, poetical flesh and blood must have the last
 ‘ word—that’s certain. I thought, and think, very
 ‘ highly of his Poem; but I warned him of the row
 ‘ his favourite antique phraseology would bring him
 ‘ into.

‘ You have taken a house at Hornsey: I had much
 ‘ rather you had taken one in the Apennines. If you
 ‘ think of coming out for a summer, or so, tell me, that
 ‘ I may be upon the hover for you.

‘ Ever, &c.’

LETTER 274.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ Venice, April 14th, 1817.

‘ By the favour of Dr. Polidori, who is here on
 ‘ his way to England with the present Lord G** (the
 ‘ late earl having gone to England by another road,
 ‘ accompanied by his bowels in a separate coffer), I
 ‘ remit to you, to deliver to Mrs. Leigh, *two minia-*
 ‘ *tures*; but previously you will have the goodness to
 ‘ desire Mr. Love (as a peace-offering between him
 ‘ and me) to set them in plain gold, with my arms
 ‘ complete, and “ Painted by Prepiani.—Venice,
 ‘ 1817,” on the back. I wish also that you would
 ‘ desire Holmes to make a copy of *each*—that is, both
 ‘ —for myself, and that you will retain the said copies
 ‘ till my return. One was done while I was very
 ‘ unwell; the other in my health, which may account
 ‘ for their dissimilitude. I trust that they will reach
 ‘ their destination in safety.

‘ I recommend the doctor to your good offices with

‘ your government friends ; and if you can be of any
‘ use to him in a literary point of view, pray be so.

‘ To-day, or rather yesterday, for it is past midnight;
‘ I have been up to the battlements of the highest
‘ tower in Venice, and seen it and its view, in all the
‘ glory of a clear Italian sky. I also went over the
‘ Manfrini Palace, famous for its pictures. Amongst
‘ them, there is a portrait of *Ariosto*, by *Titian*, surpass-
‘ ing all my anticipation of the power of painting or
‘ human expression : it is the poetry of portrait, and
‘ the portrait of poetry. There was also one of some
‘ learned lady, centuries old, whose name I forget, but
‘ whose features must always be remembered. I never
‘ saw greater beauty, or sweetness, or wisdom :—it is
‘ the kind of face to go mad for, because it cannot walk
‘ out of its frame. There is also a famous dead Christ
‘ and live Apostles, for which Buonaparte offered in
‘ vain five thousand louis ; and of which, though it is
‘ a capo d’opera of *Titian*, as I am no connoisseur, I
‘ say little, and thought less, except of one figure in
‘ it. There are ten thousand others, and some very
‘ fine *Giorgiones* amongst them, &c. &c. There is an
‘ original *Laura* and *Petrarch*, very hideous both.
‘ *Petrarch* has not only the dress, but the features and
‘ air of an old woman, and *Laura* looks by no means
‘ like a young one, or a pretty one. What struck me
‘ most in the general collection was the extreme re-
‘ semblance of the style of the female faces in the mass
‘ of pictures, so many centuries or generations old, to
‘ those you see and meet every day among the existing
‘ Italians. The queen of Cyprus and *Giorgione’s* wife,
‘ particularly the latter, are Venetians as it were of
‘ yesterday ; the same eyes and expression, and, to my
‘ mind, there is none finer.

‘ You must recollect, however, that I know nothing
 ‘ of painting; and that I detest it, unless it reminds
 ‘ me of something I have seen, or think it possible to
 ‘ see, for which reason I spit upon and abhor all the
 ‘ Saints and subjects of one half the impostures I see
 ‘ in the churches and palaces; and when in Flanders,
 ‘ I never was so disgusted in my life, as with Rubens
 ‘ and his eternal wives and infernal glare of colours, as
 ‘ they appeared to me; and in Spain I did not think
 ‘ much of Murillo and Velasquez. Depend upon it,
 ‘ of all the arts, it is the most artificial and unnatural,
 ‘ and that by which the nonsense of mankind is most
 ‘ imposed upon. I never yet saw the picture or the
 ‘ statue which came a league within my conception or
 ‘ expectation; but I have seen many mountains, and
 ‘ seas, and rivers, and views, and two or three women,
 ‘ who went as far beyond it,—besides some horses;
 ‘ and a lion (at Veli Pacha’s) in the Morea; and a
 ‘ tiger at supper in Exeter ’Change.

‘ When you write, continue to address to me at
 ‘ *Venice*. Where do you suppose the books you sent
 ‘ to me are? At *Turin*! This comes of “*the Foreign*
 ‘ *Office*,” which is foreign enough, God knows, for any
 ‘ good it can be of to me, or any one else, and be
 ‘ d——d to it, to its last clerk and first charlatan,
 ‘ Castlereagh.

‘ This makes my hundredth letter at least.

‘ Yours, &c.’

LETTER 275.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, April 14th, 1817.*

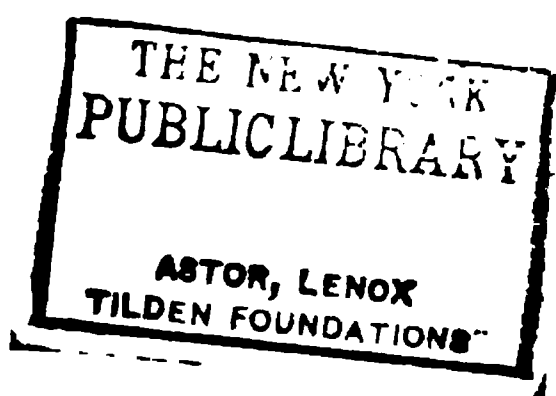
‘ The present proofs (of the whole) begin only at the
 ‘ 17th page; but as I had corrected and sent back the
 ‘ First Act, it does not signify.

Drawn by E. Turner

Engraved by W. Fisher

THE LITTLE GIRL WHO WAS BORN IN THE
YEAR OF THE GREAT FLOOD

"You who shall survive when you hear her tale
Oh could you be with her in her after hour"



‘ The Third Act is certainly d—d bad, and, like the
‘ Archbishop of Grenada’s homily (which savoured of
‘ the palsy), has the dregs of my fever, during which
‘ it was written. It must on *no account* be published
‘ in its present state. I will try and reform it, or re-
‘ write it altogether; but the impulse is gone, and I
‘ have no chance of making anything out of it. I would
‘ not have it published as it is on any account. The
‘ speech of Manfred to the Sun is the only part of this
‘ act I thought good myself; the rest is certainly as
‘ bad as bad can be, and I wonder what the devil
‘ possessed me.

‘ I am very glad indeed that you sent me Mr. Gif-
‘ ford’s opinion without *deduction*. Do you suppose
‘ me such a booby as not to be very much obliged to
‘ him? or that in fact I was not, and am not, convinced
‘ and convicted in my conscience of this same overt
‘ act of nonsense?

‘ I shall try at it again: in the mean time, lay it
‘ upon the shelf (the whole Drama, I mean); but pray
‘ correct your copies of the First and Second Act from
‘ the original MS.

‘ I am not coming to England; but going to Rome
‘ in a few days. I return to Venice in *June*; so, pray,
‘ address all letters, &c. to me *here*, as usual, that is,
‘ to *Venice*. Dr. Polidori this day left this city with
‘ Lord G * * for England. He is charged with
‘ some books to your care (from me), and two minia-
‘ tures also to the same address, *both* for my sister.

‘ Recollect *not* to publish, upon pain of I know not
‘ what, until I have tried again at the Third Act. I
‘ am not sure that I *shall* try, and still less that I shall
‘ succeed, if I do; but I am very sure, that (as it is) it
‘ is unfit for publication or perusal; and unless I can

‘ make it out to my own satisfaction, I won’t have any
‘ part published.

‘ I write in haste, and after having lately written
‘ very often. ‘ Yours, &c.’

LETTER 276.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ Foligno, April 26th, 1817. ’

‘ I wrote to you the other day from Florence, in-
‘ closing a MS. entitled “The Lament of Tasso.” It
‘ was written in consequence of my having been lately
‘ at Ferrara. In the last section of this MS. *but one*
‘ (that is, the penultimate), I think that I have omitted
‘ a line in the copy sent to you from Florence, viz.
‘ after the line—

‘ And woo compassion to a blighted name,
‘ insert,

‘ Sealing the sentence which my foes proclaim.

‘ The *context* will show you *the sense*, which is not
‘ clear in this quotation. *Remember, I write this in*
‘ *the supposition that you have received my Florentine*
‘ *packet.*

‘ At Florence I remained but a day, having a hurry
‘ for Rome, to which I am thus far advanced. How-
‘ ever, I went to the two galleries, from which one
‘ returns drunk with beauty. The Venus is more for
‘ admiration than love; but there are sculpture and
‘ painting, which for the first time at all gave me an
‘ idea of what people mean by their *cant*, and what Mr.
‘ Braham calls “entusimusy” (i. e. enthusiasm) about
‘ those two most artificial of the arts. What struck
‘ me most were, the mistress of Raphael, a portrait;
‘ the mistress of Titian, a portrait; a Venus of Titian
‘ in the Medici gallery—the Venus; Canova’s Venus
‘ also, in the other gallery: Titian’s mistress is also
‘ in the other gallery (that is, in the Pitti Palace

‘ gallery): the *Parcæ* of Michael Angelo, a picture ;
‘ and the Antinous, the Alexander, and one or two not
‘ very decent groups in marble ; the Genius of Death,
‘ a sleeping figure, &c. &c.

‘ I also went to the Medici chapel—fine frippery in
‘ great slabs of various expensive stones, to commemo-
‘ rate fifty rotten and forgotten carcasses. It is unfi-
‘ nished, and will remain so.

‘ The church of “Santa Croce” contains much illus-
‘ trious nothing. The tombs of Machiavelli, Michael
‘ Angelo, Galileo Galilei, and Alfieri, make it the
‘ Westminster Abbey of Italy. I did not admire *any*
‘ of these tombs—beyond their contents. That of
‘ Alfieri is heavy, and all of them seem to me over-
‘ loaded. What is necessary but a bust and name ?
‘ and perhaps a date ? the last for the unchronologi-
‘ cal, of whom I am one. But all your allegory and
‘ eulogy is infernal, and worse than the long wigs of
‘ English numskulls upon Roman bodies in the sta-
‘ tuary of the reigns of Charles II., William, and
‘ Anne.

‘ When you write, write to *Venice*, as usual ; I mean
‘ to return there in a fortnight. I shall not be in
‘ England for a long time. This afternoon I met Lord
‘ and Lady Jersey, and saw them for some time : all
‘ well ; children grown and healthy ; she very pretty,
‘ but sunburnt ; he very sick of travelling ; bound for
‘ Paris. There are not many English on the move,
‘ and those who are, mostly homewards. I shall not
‘ return till business makes me, being much better
‘ where I am in health, &c. &c.

‘ For the sake of my personal comfort, I pray you
‘ send me immediately to *Venice*—*mind, Venice*—viz.
‘ *Waites’ tooth-powder, red, a quantity ; calcined mag-*

‘ *nesia*, of the best quality, a quantity ; and all this by
 ‘ safe, sure, and speedy means ; and, by the Lord !
 ‘ do it.

‘ I have done nothing at Manfred’s Third Act. You
 ‘ must wait ; I’ll have at it in a week or two, or so.

‘ Yours ever, &c.’

LETTER 277.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Rome, May 5th, 1817.*

‘ By this post (or next at farthest) I send you in
 ‘ two *other* covers, the new Third Act of “ Manfred.”
 ‘ I have re-written the greater part, and returned what
 ‘ is not altered in the *proof* you sent me. The Abbot
 ‘ is become a good man, and the Spirits are brought in
 ‘ at the death. You will find, I think, some good poetry
 ‘ in this new act, here and there ; and if so, print it,
 ‘ without sending me farther proofs, *under Mr. Gifford’s*
 ‘ *correction*, if he will have the goodness to overlook it.
 ‘ Address all answers to *Venice*, as usual ; I mean to
 ‘ return there in ten days.

‘ “ The Lament of Tasso,” which I sent from Flo-
 ‘ rence, has, I trust, arrived : I look upon it as a “ these
 ‘ be good rhymes,” as Pope’s papa said to him when
 ‘ he was a boy. For the *two—it* and the Drama—you
 ‘ will disburse to me (*via Kinnaird*) *six* hundred guineas.
 ‘ You will perhaps be surprised that I set the same
 ‘ price upon this as upon the Drama ; but, besides that
 ‘ I look upon it as *good*, I won’t take less than three
 ‘ hundred guineas for anything. The two together
 ‘ will make you a larger publication than the “ Siege ”
 ‘ and “ Parisina ;” so you may think yourself let off
 ‘ very easy : that is to say, if these poems are good for
 ‘ anything, which I hope and believe.

‘ I have been some days in Rome the Wonderful. I

[W. H. P.]

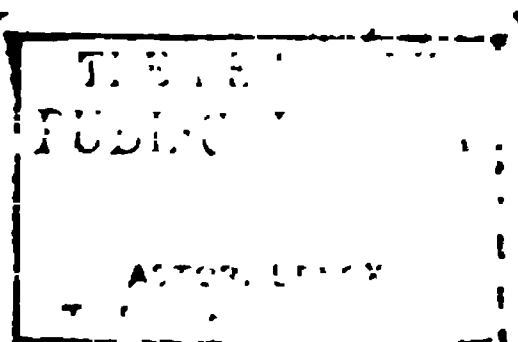
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The Life of John Murray

LONDON

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET

1892



‘ am seeing sights, and have done nothing else, except
‘ the new Third Act for you. I have this morning seen
‘ a live pope and a dead cardinal: Pius VII. has been
‘ burying Cardinal Bracchi, whose body I saw in state
‘ at the Chiesa Nuova. Rome has delighted me
‘ beyond everything, since Athens and Constantinople.
‘ But I shall not remain long this visit. Address to
‘ Venice. ‘ Ever, &c.

‘ P.S. I have got my saddle-horses here, and have
‘ ridden, and am riding, all about the country.’

From the foregoing letters to Mr. Murray, we may collect some curious particulars respecting one of the most original and sublime of the noble poet’s productions, the Drama of Manfred. His failure (and to an extent of which the reader shall be enabled presently to judge), in the completion of a design which he had, through two Acts, so magnificently carried on,—the impatience with which, though conscious of this failure, he as usual hurried to the press, without deigning to woo, or wait for, a happier moment of inspiration,—his frank docility in, at once, surrendering up his Third Act to reprobation, without urging one parental word in its behalf,—the doubt he evidently felt, whether, from his habit of striking off these creations at a heat, he should be able to rekindle his imagination on the subject,—and then, lastly, the complete success with which, when his mind *did* make the spring, he at once cleared the whole space by which he before fell short of perfection,—all these circumstances, connected with the production of this grand Poem, lay open to us features, both of his disposition and genius, in the highest degree interesting, and such as there is a pleasure, second only to that of perusing the Poem itself, in contemplating.

As a literary curiosity, and, still more, as a lesson to genius, never to rest satisfied with imperfection or mediocrity, but to labour on till even failures are converted into triumphs, I shall here transcribe the Third Act, in its original shape, as first sent to the publisher:—

ACT III.—SCENE I.

A Hall in the Castle of Manfred.

MANFRED and HERMAN.

Man. What is the hour?

Her. It wants but one till sunset,
And promises a lovely twilight.

Man. Say,
Are all things so disposed of in the tower
As I directed?

Her. All, my lord are ready:
Here is the key and casket.

Man. It is well:
Thou may'st retire.

[*Exit HERMAN.*]

Man. (alone.) There is a calm upon me—
Inexplicable stillness! which till now
Did not belong to what I knew of life.
If that I did not know philosophy
To be of all our vanities the motliest,
The merest word that ever fool'd the ear
From out the schoolman's jargon, I should deem
The golden secret, the sought 'Kalon,' found,
And seated in my soul. It will not last,
But it is well to have known it, though but once:
It hath enlarged my thoughts with a new sense,
And I within my tablets would note down
That there is such a feeling. Who is there?

Re-enter HERMAN.

Her. My lord, the Abbot of St. Maurice craves
To greet your presence.

Enter the ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE.

Abbot. Peace be with Count Manfred!

Man. Thanks, holy father! welcome to these walls;
Thy presence honours them, and blesseth those
Who dwell within them.

Abbot. Would it were so, Count!
But I would fain confer with thee alone.

Man. Herman, retire. What would my reverend guest?

[*Exit HERMAN.*]

Abbot. Thus, without prelude:—Age and zeal, my office,
And good intent, must plead my privilege;
Our near, though not acquainted neighbourhood,
May also be my herald. Rumours strange,
And of unholy nature, are abroad,
And busy with thy name—a noble name
For centuries; may he who bears it now
Transmit it unimpair'd.

Man. Proceed,—I listen.

Abbot. 'Tis said thou holdest converse with the things
Which are forbidden to the search of man;
That with the dwellers of the dark abodes,
The many evil and unheavenly spirits
Which walk the valley of the shade of death,
Thou communest. I know that with mankind,
Thy fellows in creation, thou dost rarely
Exchange thy thoughts, and that thy solitude
Is as an anchorite's, were it but holy.

Man. And what are they who do avouch these things?

Abbot. My pious brethren—the scared peasantry—
Even thy own vassals—who do look on thee
With most unquiet eyes. Thy life's in peril.

Man. Take it.

Abbot. I come to save, and not destroy—
I would not pry into thy secret soul;
But if these things be sooth, there still is time
For penitence and pity: reconcile thee
With the true church, and through the church to heaven.

Man. I hear thee. This is my reply; whate'er
I may have been, or am, doth rest between
Heaven and myself.—I shall not choose a mortal
To be my mediator. Have I sinn'd
Against your ordinances? prove and punish*!

Abbot. Then, hear and tremble! For the headstrong wretch
Who in the mail of innate hardihood
Would shield himself, and battle for his sins,
There is the stake on earth, and beyond earth eternal—

Man. Charity, most reverend father,
Becomes thy lips so much more than this menace,

* It will be perceived that, as far as this, the original matter of the Third Act has been retained.

That I would call thee back to it; but say,
What wouldst thou with me?

Abbot. It may be there are
Things that would shake thee—but I keep them back,
And give thee till to-morrow to repent.
Then if thou dost not all devote thyself
To penance, and with gift of all thy lands
To the monastery——

Man. I understand thee,—well!

Abbot. Expect no mercy; I have warned thee.

Man. (opening the casket.) Stop—
There is a gift for thee within this casket.

[MANFRED opens the casket, strikes a light, and burns
some incense.]

Ho! Ashtaroth!

The DEMON ASHTAROTH appears, singing as follows:

The raven sits

On the raven-stone,
And his black wing flits

O'er the milk-white bone;
To and fro, as the night-winds blow,
The carcass of the assassin swings;
And there alone, on the raven-stone*,
The raven flaps his dusky wings.

The fetters creak—and his ebon beak
Croaks to the close of the hollow sound;
And this is the tune by the light of the moon
To which the witches dance their round
Merrily, merrily, cheerily, cheerily,
Merrily, speeds the ball:
The dead in their shrouds, and the demons in clouds,
Flock to the witches carnival.

Abbot. I fear thee not—hence—hence—
Avaunt thee, evil one!—help, ho! without there!

Man. Convey this man to the Shreckhorn—to its peak—
To its extremest peak—watch with him there
From now till sunrise; let him gaze, and know
He ne'er again will be so near to heaven.
But harm him not; and, when the morrow breaks,
Set him down safe in his cell—away with him!

* 'Raven-stone (Rabenstein), a translation of the German word for
'the gibbet, which in Germany and Switzerland is permanent, and
'made of stone.'

Ash. Had I not better bring his brethren too,
Convent and all, to bear him company ?

Man. No, this will serve for the present. Take him up.

Ash. Come, friar ! now an exorcism or two,
And we shall fly the lighter.

ASHTAROTH disappears with the ABBOT, singing as follows :

A prodigal son and a maid undone,
And a widow re-wedded within the year;
And a worldly monk and a pregnant nun,
Are things which every day appear.

MANFRED alone.

Man. Why would this fool break in on me, and force
My art to pranks fantastical ?—no matter,
It was not of my seeking. My heart sickens
And weighs a fix'd foreboding on my soul ;
But it is calm—calm as a sullen sea
After the hurricane ; the winds are still,
But the cold waves swell high and heavily,
And there is danger in them. Such a rest
Is no repose. My life hath been a combat,
And every thought a wound, till I am scarr'd
In the immortal part of me.—What now ?

Re-enter HERMAN.

Her. My lord, you bade me wait on you at sunset :
He sinks behind the mountain.

Man. Doth he so ?
I will look on him.

[*MANFRED advances to the window of the hall.*

Glorious orb* ! the idol
Of early nature, and the vigorous race
Of undiseased mankind, the giant sons
Of the embrace of angels, with a sex
More beautiful than they, which did draw down
The erring spirits who can ne'er return.—
Most glorious orb ! that wert a worship, ere
The mystery of thy making was reveal'd !
Thou earliest minister of the Almighty,
Which gladden'd, on their mountain tops, the hearts
Of the Chaldean shepherds, till they pour'd
Themselves in orisons ! Thou material God !
And representative of the Unknown—

* This fine soliloquy, and a great part of the subsequent scene, have, it is hardly necessary to remark, been retained in the present form of the Drama.

Who chose thee for his shadow ! Thou chief star !
 Centre of many stars ! which mak'st our earth
 Endurable, and temperest the hues
 And hearts of all who walk within thy rays !
 Sire of the seasons ! Monarch of the climes,
 And those who dwell in them ! for, near or far,
 Our inborn spirits have a tint of thee,
 Even as our outward aspects ;—thou dost rise,
 And shine, and set in glory. Fare thee well !
 I ne'er shall see thee more. As my first glance
 Of love and wonder was for thee, then take
 My latest look : thou wilt not beam on one
 To whom the gifts of life and warmth have been
 Of a more fatal nature. He is gone :
 I follow.

[Exit MANFRED.]

SCENE II.

*The Mountains—the Castle of Manfred at some distance—A Terrace
 before a Tower—Time, Twilight.*

HERMAN, MANUEL, and other Dependants of MANFRED.

Her. 'Tis strange enough ; night after night, for years,
 He hath pursued long vigils in this tower,
 Without a witness. I have been within it,—
 So have we all been oft-times ; but from it,
 Or its contents, it were impossible
 To draw conclusions absolute of aught
 His studies tend to. To be sure, there is
 One chamber where none enter ; I would give
 The fee of what I have to come these three years,
 To pore upon its mysteries.

Manuel. 'Twere dangerous ;
 Content thyself with what thou know'st already.

Her. Ah ! Manuel ! thou art elderly and wise,
 And couldst say much ; thou hast dwelt within the castle—
 How many years is't ?

Manuel. Ere Count Manfred's birth,
 I served his father, whom he nought resembles.

Her. There be more sons in like predicament.
 But wherein do they differ ?

Manuel. I speak not
 Of features or of form, but mind and habits :
 Count Sigismund was proud,—but gay and free,—
 A warrior and a reveller ; he dwelt not
 With books and solitude, nor made the night
 A gloomy vigil, but a festal time,
 Merrier than day ; he did not walk the rocks

And forests like a wolf, nor turn aside
From men and their delights.

Her. Beshrew the hour,
But those were jocund times! I would that such
Would visit the old walls again; they look
As if they had forgotten them.

Manuel. These walls
Must change their chieftain first. Oh! I have seen
Some strange things in these few years*.

Her. Come, be friendly;
Relate me some, to while away our watch;
I've heard thee darkly speak of an event
Which happened hereabouts, by this same tower.

Manuel. That was a night indeed! I do remember
'Twas twilight, as it may be now, and such
Another evening;—yon red cloud, which rests
On Eigher's pinnacle, so rested then,—
So like that it might be the same; the wind
Was faint and gusty, and the mountain snows
Began to glitter with the climbing moon;
Count Manfred was, as now, within his tower,—
How occupied, we knew not, but with him
The sole companion of his wanderings
And watchings—her, whom of all earthly things
That lived, the only thing he seemed to love,—
As he, indeed, by blood was bound to do,
The lady Astarte, his—

Her. Look—look—the tower—
The tower's on fire. Oh heavens and earth! what sound
What dreadful sound is that? *[A crash like thunder.]*

Manuel. Help, help, there!—to the rescue of the Count,—
The Count's in danger,—what ho! there! approach!

*[The Servants, Vassals, and Peasantry approach, stupified
with terror.]*

If there be any of you who have heart
And love of human kind, and will to aid
Those in distress—pause not—but follow me—
The portal's open, follow.

[MANUEL goes in.]

Her. Come—who follows?
What, none of ye?—ye recreants! shiver then
Without. I will not see old Manuel risk
His few remaining years unaided.

[HERMAN goes in.]

Vassal. Hark!—
No—all is silent—not a breath—the flame

* Altered in the present form, to 'some strange things in them, Herman.'

Which shot forth such a blaze is also gone ;
What may this mean ? let's enter !

Peasant. Faith, not I,—
Not that, if one, or two, or more, will join,
I then will stay behind ; but, for my part,
I do not see precisely to what end.

Vassal. Cease your vain prating—come.

Manuel. (speaking within.) 'Tis all in vain—
He's dead.

Her. (within.) Not so—even now methought he moved ;
But it is dark—so bear him gently out—
Softly—how cold he is ! take care of his temples
In winding down the staircase.

Re-enter MANUEL and HERMAN, bearing MANFRED in their arms.

Manuel. Hie to the castle, some of ye, and bring
What aid you can. Saddle the barb, and speed
For the leech to the city—quick ! some water there !

Her. His cheek is black—but there is a faint beat
Still lingering about the heart. Some water.

*[They sprinkle MANFRED with water ; after a pause, he
gives some signs of life.]*

Manuel. He seems to strive to speak—come—cheerly, Count !
He moves his lips—canst hear him ? I am old,
And cannot catch faint sounds.

[HERMAN inclining his head and listening.]

Her. I hear a word
Or two—but indistinctly—what is next ?
What's to be done ? let's bear him to the castle.

[MANFRED motions with his hand not to remove him.]

Manuel. He disapproves—and 'twere of no avail—
He changes rapidly.

Her. 'Twill soon be over.

Manuel. Oh ! what a death is this ! that I should live
To shake my gray hairs over the last chief
Of the house of Sigismund.—And such a death !
Alone—we know not how—unshrived—untended—
With strange accompaniments and fearful signs—
I shudder at the sight—but must not leave him.

Manfred. (speaking faintly and slowly.) Old man ! 'tis not so dif-
ficult to die. *[MANFRED having said this expires.]*

Her. His eyes are fix'd and lifeless.—He is gone.—

Manuel. Close them.—My old hand quivers.—He departs—
Whither ? I dread to think—but he is gone !

LETTER 278.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Rome, May 9th, 1817.*

‘ Address all answers to Venice ; for there I shall
‘ return in fifteen days, God willing.

‘ I sent you from Florence “ The Lament of Tasso,”
‘ and from Rome the Third Act of Manfred, both of
‘ which, I trust, will duly arrive. The terms of these
‘ two I mentioned in my last, and will repeat in this :
‘ it is three hundred for each, or *six* hundred guineas
‘ for the two—that is, if you like, and they are good
‘ for anything.

‘ At last one of the parcels is arrived. In the notes
‘ to Childe Harold there is a blunder of yours or mine :
‘ you talk of arrival at *St. Gingo*, and, immediately
‘ after, add—“ on the height is the Chateau of Cla-
‘ rens.” This is sad work : Clarens is on the *other*
‘ side of the Lake, and it is quite impossible that I
‘ should have so bungled. Look at the MS. ; and at
‘ any rate rectify it.

‘ The “ Tales of my Landlord ” I have read with
‘ great pleasure, and perfectly understand now why
‘ my sister and aunt are so very positive in the very
‘ erroneous persuasion that they must have been written
‘ by me. If you knew me as well as they do, you
‘ would have fallen, perhaps, into the same mistake.
‘ Some day or other, I will explain to you *why*—when
‘ I have time ; at present, it does not much matter ; but
‘ you must have thought this blunder of theirs very
‘ odd, and so did I, till I had read the book. Croker’s
‘ letter to you is a very great compliment ; I shall
‘ return it to you in my next.

‘ I perceive you are publishing a Life of Raffael
‘ d’Urbino : it may perhaps interest you to hear that a
‘ set of German artists here allow their *hair* to grow,

‘ and trim it into *his fashion*, thereby drinking the
‘ cummin of the disciples of the old philosopher; if
‘ they would cut their hair, convert it into brushes,
‘ and paint like him, it would be more “*German* to
‘ the matter.”

‘ I’ll tell you a story: the other day, a man here—
‘ an English—mistaking the statues of Charlemagne
‘ and Constantine, which are *equestrian*, for those of
‘ Peter and Paul, asked another *which* was Paul of
‘ these same horsemen?—to which the reply was,—
‘ “I thought, sir, that St. Paul had never got on
‘ horseback since his *accident*?”

‘ I’ll tell you another: Henry Fox, writing to some
‘ one from Naples the other day, after an illness, adds
‘ —“and I am so changed, that my *oldest creditors*
‘ would hardly know me.”

‘ I am delighted with Rome—as I would be with a
‘ bandbox, that is, it is a fine thing to see, finer than
‘ Greece; but I have not been here long enough to
‘ affect it as a residence, and I must go back to Lom-
‘ bardy, because I am wretched at being away from
‘ Marianna. I have been riding my saddle-horses
‘ every-day, and been to Albano, its Lakes, and to the
‘ top of the Alban Mount, and to Frascati, Aricia,
‘ &c. &c. with an &c. &c. &c. about the city, and in the
‘ city: for all which—vide Guide-book. As a whole,
‘ ancient and modern, it beats Greece, Constantinople,
‘ everything—at least that I have ever seen. But I
‘ can’t describe, because my first impressions are always
‘ strong and confused, and my memory *selects* and
‘ reduces them to order, like distance in the landscape,
‘ and blends them better, although they may be less
‘ distinct. There must be a sense or two more than we
‘ have, us mortals; for * * * * * where there is much

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‘ to be grasped we are always at a loss, and yet feel
‘ that we ought to have a higher and more extended
‘ comprehension.

‘ I have had a letter from Moore, who is in some
‘ alarm about his Poem. I don’t see why.

‘ I have had another from my poor dear Augusta,
‘ who is in a sad fuss about my late illness; do, pray,
‘ tell her (the truth) that I am better than ever, and
‘ in importunate health, growing (if not grown) large
‘ and ruddy, and congratulated by impertinent persons
‘ on my robustious appearance, when I ought to be
‘ pale and interesting.

‘ You tell me that George Byron has got a son, and
‘ Augusta says, a daughter; which is it?—it is no great
‘ matter: the father is a good man, an excellent officer,
‘ and has married a very nice little woman, who will
‘ bring him more babes than income; howbeit she had
‘ a handsome dowry, and is a very charming girl;—
‘ but he may as well get a ship.

‘ I have no thoughts of coming amongst you yet
‘ awhile, so that I can fight off business. If I could
‘ but make a tolerable sale of Newstead, there would
‘ be no occasion for my return; and I can assure you
‘ very sincerely, that I am much happier (or, at least,
‘ have been so) out of your island than in it.

‘ Yours ever.

‘ P.S. There are few English here, but several of
‘ my acquaintance; amongst others, the Marquis of
‘ Lansdowne, with whom I dine to-morrow. I met the
‘ Jerseys on the road at Foligno—all well.

‘ Oh—I forgot—the Italians have printed Chillon, &c.
‘ a *piracy*,—a pretty little edition, prettier than yours
‘ —and published, as I found to my great astonish-
‘ ment on arriving here; and what is odd, is, that the

‘ English is quite correctly printed. Why they did it,
‘ or who did it, I know not; but so it is;—I suppose,
‘ for the English people. I will send you a copy.’

LETTER 279.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ Rome, May 12th, 1817.

‘ I have received your letter here, where I have
‘ taken a cruise lately; but I shall return back to
‘ Venice in a few days, so that if you write again,
‘ address there, as usual. I am not for returning to
‘ England so soon as you imagine; and by no means at
‘ all as a residence. If you cross the Alps in your pro-
‘ jected expedition, you will find me somewhere in
‘ Lombardy, and very glad to see you. Only give me
‘ a word or two beforehand, for I would readily diverge
‘ some leagues to meet you.

‘ Of Rome I say nothing; it is quite indescrib-
able, and the Guide-book is as good as any other.
‘ I dined yesterday with Lord Lansdowne, who is on
‘ his return. But there are few English here at pre-
‘ sent; the winter is *their* time. I have been on
‘ horseback most of the day, all days since my arri-
‘ val, and have taken it as I did Constantinople.
‘ But Rome is the elder sister, and the finer. I
‘ went some days ago to the top of the Alban Mount,
‘ which is superb. As for the Coliseum, Pantheon,
‘ St. Peter’s, the Vatican, Palatine, &c. &c.—as I said,
‘ vide Guide-book. They are quite inconceivable, and
‘ must *be seen*. The Apollo Belvidere is the image of
‘ Lady Adelaide Forbes—I think I never saw such a
‘ likeness.

‘ I have seen the Pope alive, and a cardinal dead,—
‘ both of whom looked very well indeed. The latter

‘ was in state in the Chiesa Nuova, previous to his
‘ interment.

‘ Your poetical alarms are groundless; go on and
‘ prosper. Here is Hobhouse just come in, and my
‘ horses at the door, so that I must mount and take the
‘ field in the Campus Martius, which, by the way, is
‘ all built over by modern Rome.

‘ Yours very and ever, &c.

‘ P.S. Hobhouse presents his remembrances, and is
‘ eager, with all the world, for your new Poem.’

LETTER 280.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ Venice, May 30th, 1817.

‘ I returned from Rome two days ago, and have
‘ received your letter; but no sign nor tidings of the
‘ parcel sent through Sir C. Stuart, which you men-
‘ tion. After an interval of months, a packet of “Tales,”
‘ &c. found me at Rome; but this is all, and may be
‘ all that ever will find me. The post seems to be the
‘ only sure conveyance, and *that only for letters*. From
‘ Florence I sent you a poem on Tasso, and from Rome
‘ the new Third Act of “Manfred,” and by Dr. Polidori
‘ two portraits for my sister. I left Rome and made a
‘ rapid journey home. You will continue to direct
‘ here as usual. Mr. Hobhouse is gone to Naples: I
‘ should have run down there too for a week, but for
‘ the quantity of English whom I heard of there. I
‘ prefer hating them at a distance; unless an earth-
‘ quake, or a good real irruption of Vesuvius, were
‘ ensured to reconcile me to their vicinity.

‘ The day before I left Rome I saw three robbers
‘ guillotined. The ceremony—including the *masqued*
‘ priests; the half-naked executioners; the bandaged

‘ criminals; the black Christ and his banner; the
‘ scaffold; the soldiery; the slow procession, and the
‘ quick rattle and heavy fall of the axe; the splash of
‘ the blood, and the ghastliness of the exposed heads—
‘ is altogether more impressive than the vulgar and
‘ ungentlemanly dirty “new drop,” and dog-like agony
‘ of infliction upon the sufferers of the English sen-
‘ tence. Two of these men behaved calmly enough,
‘ but the first of the three died with great terror and
‘ reluctance. What was very horrible, he would not
‘ lie down; then his neck was too large for the aper-
‘ ture, and the priest was obliged to drown his excla-
‘ mations by still louder exhortations. The head was
‘ off before the eye could trace the blow; but from an
‘ attempt to draw back the head, notwithstanding it
‘ was held forward by the hair, the first head was cut
‘ off close to the ears: the other two were taken off
‘ more cleanly. It is better than the oriental way, and
‘ (I should think) than the axe of our ancestors. The
‘ pain seems little, and yet the effect to the spectator,
‘ and the preparation to the criminal, is very striking
‘ and chilling. The first turned me quite hot and
‘ thirsty, and made me shake so that I could hardly
‘ hold the opera-class (I was close, but was determined
‘ to see, as one should see everything, once, with atten-
‘ tion); the second and third (which shows how dread-
‘ fully soon things grow indifferent), I am ashamed to
‘ say, had no effect on me as a horror, though I would
‘ have saved them if I could. Yours, &c.’

LETTER 281.

TO MR. MURRAY.

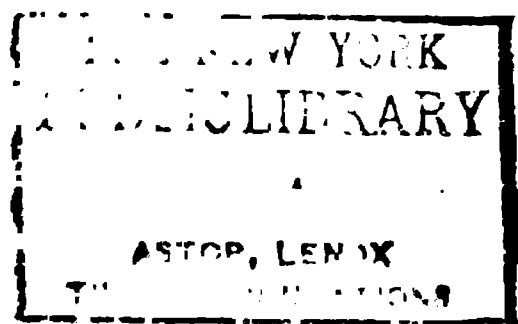
Venice, June 4th, 1817.

‘ I have received the proofs of the “Lament of
‘ Tasso,” which makes me hope that you have also

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‘ received the reformed Third Act of Manfred, from
‘ Rome, which I sent soon after my arrival there. My
‘ date will apprize you of my return home within these
‘ few days. For me, I have received *none* of your
‘ packets, except, after long delay, the “Tales of my
‘ Landlord,” which I before acknowledged. I do not
‘ at all understand the *why not*s, but so it is;—no
‘ Manuel, no letters, no tooth-powder, no *extract*
‘ from Moore’s Italy concerning Marino Faliero, no
‘ NOTHING—as a man hallooed out at one of Burdett’s
‘ elections, after a long ululatus of “No Bastille! No
‘ governor-ities! No—” God knows who or what;—
‘ but his *ne plus ultra* was “No nothing!”—and my
‘ receipts of your packages amount to about his mean-
‘ ing. I want the extract from *Moore’s* Italy very
‘ much, and the tooth-powder, and the magnesia; I
‘ don’t care so much about the poetry, or the letters,
‘ or Mr. Maturin’s by-Jasus tragedy. Most of the
‘ things sent by the post have come—I mean proofs
‘ and letters; therefore send me Marino Faliero by
‘ the post, in a letter.

‘ I was delighted with Rome, and was on horseback
‘ all round it many hours daily, besides in it the rest
‘ of my time, bothering over its marvels. I excursed
‘ and skirred the country round to Alba, Tivoli, Fres-
‘ cati, Licenza, &c. &c.; besides, I visited twice the
‘ Fall of Terni, which beats every thing. On my way
‘ back, close to the temple by its banks, I got some
‘ famous trout out of the river Clitumnus—the prettiest
‘ little stream in all poesy, near the first post from
‘ Foligno and Spoleto.—I did not stay at Florence,
‘ being anxious to get home to Venice, and having
‘ already seen the galleries and other sights. I left
‘ my commendatory letters the evening before I went,
‘ so I saw nobody.

‘ To-day, Pindemonte, the celebrated poet of Ve-
‘ rona, called on me ; he is a little thin man, with
‘ acute and pleasing features ; his address good and
‘ gentle ; his appearance altogether very philosophical ;
‘ his age about sixty, or more. He is one of their best
‘ going. I gave him *Forsyth*, as he speaks, or reads
‘ rather, a little English, and will find there a favour-
‘ able account of himself. He inquired after his old
‘ Cruscan friends, Parsons, Greathead, Mrs. Piozzi,
‘ and Merry, all of whom he had known in his youth.
‘ I gave him as bad an account of them as I could,
‘ answering, as the false “Solomon Lob” does to
‘ “Totterton” in the farce, “all gone dead,” and
‘ damned by a satire more than twenty years ago ;
‘ that the name of their extinguisher was Gifford ; that
‘ they were but a sad set of scribes after all, and no
‘ great things in any other way. He seemed, as was
‘ natural, very much pleased with this account of his
‘ old acquaintances, and went away greatly gratified
‘ with that and Mr. Forsyth’s sententious paragraph
‘ of applause in his own (Pindemonte’s) favour. After
‘ having been a little libertine in his youth, he is
‘ grown devout, and takes prayers, and talks to him-
‘ self, to keep off the devil ; but for all that, he is a
‘ very nice little old gentleman.

‘ I forgot to tell you that at Bologna (which is cele-
‘ brated for producing popes, painters, and sausages)
‘ I saw an anatomical gallery, where there is a deal of
‘ waxwork, in which * *.

‘ I am sorry to hear of your row with Hunt ; but
‘ suppose him to be exasperated by the Quarterly and
‘ your refusal to *deal* ; and when one is angry and
‘ edits a paper, I should think the temptation too
‘ strong for literary nature, which is not always
‘ human. I can’t conceive in what, and for what, he

‘ abuses you : what have you done ? you are not an
‘ author, nor a politician, nor a public character ; I
‘ know no scrape you have tumbled into. I am the
‘ more sorry for this because I introduced you to Hunt,
‘ and because I believe him to be a good man ; but
‘ till I know the particulars, I can give no opinion.

‘ Let me know about Lalla Rookh, which must be
‘ out by this time.

‘ I restore the proofs, but the *punctuation* should be
‘ corrected. I feel too lazy to have at it myself ; so
‘ beg and pray Mr. Gifford for me.—Address to Venice.
‘ In a few days I go to my *villeggiatura*, in a cassino
‘ near the Brenta, a few miles only on the main land.
‘ I have determined on another year, and *many years*
‘ of residence if I can compass them. Marianna is
‘ with me, hardly recovered of the fever, which has
‘ been attacking all Italy last winter. I am afraid she
‘ is a little hectic ; but I hope the best. Ever, &c.

‘ P.S. Torwaltzen has done a bust of me at Rome
‘ for Mr. Hobhouse, which is reckoned very good. He
‘ is their best after Canova, and by some preferred to
‘ him.

‘ I have had a letter from Mr. Hodgson. He is very
‘ happy, has got a living, but not a child : if he had
‘ stuck to a curacy, babes would have come of course,
‘ because he could not have maintained them.

‘ Remember me to all friends, &c. &c.

‘ An Austrian officer, the other day, being in love
‘ with a Venetian, was ordered, with his regiment,
‘ into Hungary. Distracted between love and duty,
‘ he purchased a deadly drug, which dividing with his
‘ mistress, both swallowed. The ensuing pains were
‘ terrific, but the pills were purgative, and not poison-
‘ ous, by the contrivance of the unsentimental apothecary.

‘ cary ; so that so much suicide was all thrown away.
 ‘ You may conceive the previous confusion and the final
 ‘ laughter ; but the intention was good on all sides.’

LETTER 282.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, June 8th, 1817.*

‘ The present letter will be delivered to you by
 ‘ two Armenian friars, on their way, by England, to
 ‘ Madras. They will also convey some copies of the
 ‘ grammar, which I think you agreed to take. If you
 ‘ can be of any use to them, either amongst your naval
 ‘ or East Indian acquaintances, I hope you will so far
 ‘ oblige me, as they and their order have been remark-
 ‘ ably attentive and friendly towards me since my
 ‘ arrival at Venice. Their names are Father Sukias
 ‘ Somalian and Father Sarkis Theodorosian. They
 ‘ speak Italian, and probably French, or a little Eng-
 ‘ lish. Repeating earnestly my commendatory re-
 ‘ quest, believe me, very truly, yours,

‘ BYRON.

‘ Perhaps you can help them to their passage, or
 ‘ give or get them letters for India.’

LETTER 283.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *La Mira, near Venice, June 14th, 1817.*

‘ I write to you from the banks of the Brenta, a
 ‘ few miles from Venice, where I have colonized for
 ‘ six months to come. Address, as usual, to Venice.

‘ Three months after date (17th March),—like the
 ‘ unnegotiable bill despondingly received by the re-
 ‘ luctant tailor,—your despatch has arrived, containing
 ‘ the extract from Moore’s Italy and Mr. Maturin’s
 ‘ bankrupt tragedy. It is the absurd work of a clever
 ‘ man. I think it might have done upon the stage, if

‘ he had made Manuel (by some trickery, in a masque
‘ or vizor) fight his own battle, instead of employing
‘ Molineux as his champion; and, after the defeat of
‘ Torismond, have made him spare the son of his
‘ enemy, by some revulsion of feeling, not incompatible
‘ with a character of extravagant and distempered
‘ emotions. But as it is, what with the Justiza, and
‘ the ridiculous conduct of the whole *dram. pers.* (for
‘ they are all as mad as Manuel, who surely must have
‘ had more interest with a corrupt bench than a distant
‘ relation and heir presumptive, somewhat suspect of
‘ homicide), I do not wonder at its failure. As a play,
‘ it is impracticable; as a poem, no great things.
‘ Who was the “Greek that grappled with glory
‘ naked?” the Olympic wrestlers? or Alexander the
‘ Great, when he ran stark round the tomb of t’other
‘ fellow? or the Spartan who was fined by the Ephori
‘ for fighting without his armour? or who? And as
‘ to “flaying off life like a garment,” *belas!* that’s in
‘ Tom Thumb—see king Arthur’s soliloquy:

“ Life’s a mere rag, not worth a prince’s wearing;

“ I’ll cast it off.”

‘ And the stage-directions — “Staggers among the
‘ bodies;”—the slain are too numerous, as well as the
‘ blackamoor knights-penitent being one too many:
‘ and De Zelos is such a shabby Monmouth-street vil-
‘ lain, without any redeeming quality—Stap my vitals!
‘ Maturin seems to be declining into Nat. Lee. But
‘ let him try again; he has talent, but not much taste.
‘ I ’gin to fear, or to hope, that Sotheby after all is to
‘ be the Eschylus of the age, unless Mr. Shiel be really
‘ worthy his success. The more I see of the stage, the
‘ less I would wish to have anything to do with it; as
‘ a proof of which, I hope you have received the Third

‘ Act of Manfred, which will at least prove that I wish
 ‘ to steer very clear of the possibility of being put into
 ‘ scenery. I sent it from Rome.

I returned the proof of Tasso. By the way, have
 ‘ you never received a translation of St. Paul, which I
 ‘ sent you, *not* for publication, before I went to Rome?

‘ I am at present on the Brenta. Opposite is a
 ‘ Spanish marquis, ninety years old; next his casino
 ‘ is a Frenchman’s,—besides the natives; so that, as
 ‘ somebody said the other day, we are exactly one of
 ‘ Goldoni’s comedies (*La Vedova Scaltra*), where a
 ‘ Spaniard, English, and Frenchman are introduced:
 ‘ but we are all very good neighbours, Venetians, &c.
 ‘ &c. &c.

‘ I am just getting on horseback for my evening
 ‘ ride, and a visit to a physician, who has an agree-
 ‘ able family, of a wife and four unmarried daughters,
 ‘ all under eighteen, who are friends of Signora S * *,
 ‘ and enemies to nobody. There are, and are to be,
 ‘ besides, conversaziones and I know not what, a
 ‘ Countess Labbia’s and I know not whom. The wea-
 ‘ ther is mild; the thermometer 110 in the *sun* this
 ‘ day, and 80 odd in the shade. Yours, &c.

‘ N.’

LETTER 284.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *La Mira, near Venice, June 17th, 1817.*

‘ It gives me great pleasure to hear of Moore’s suc-
 ‘ cess, and the more so that I never doubted that it
 ‘ would be complete. Whatever good you can tell me
 ‘ of him and his poem will be most acceptable: I feel
 ‘ very anxious indeed to receive it. I hope that he is
 ‘ as happy in his fame and reward as I wish him to
 ‘ be; for I know no one who deserves both more—if
 ‘ any so much.

‘ Now to business ; * * * * * I say unto you,
‘ verily, it is not so ; or, as the foreigner said to
‘ the waiter, after asking him to bring a glass of
‘ water, to which the man answered, “ I will, sir,”—
‘ “ You *will* !—G—d d—n,—I say, you *mush* !” And
‘ I will submit this to the decision of any person
‘ or persons to be appointed by both, on a fair exami-
‘ nation of the circumstances of this as compared with
‘ the preceding publications. So, there’s for you.
‘ There is always some row or other previously to all
‘ our publications : it should seem that, on approxi-
‘ mating, we can never quite get over the natural anti-
‘ pathy of author and bookseller, and that more parti-
‘ cularly the ferine nature of the latter must break
‘ forth.

‘ You are out about the Third Canto : I have not
‘ done, nor designed, a line of continuation to that
‘ poem. I was too short a time at Rome for it, and
‘ have no thought of recommencing.

‘ I cannot well explain to you by letter what I con-
‘ ceive to be the origin of Mrs. Leigh’s notion about
‘ “ Tales of my Landlord ;” but it is some points of the
‘ characters of Sir E. Manley and Burley, as well as
‘ one or two of the jocular portions, on which it is
‘ founded, probably.

‘ If you have received Dr. Polidori, as well as a par-
‘ cel of books, and you can be of use to him, be so. I
‘ never was much more disgusted with any human
‘ production than with the eternal nonsense, and tra-
‘ casseries, and emptiness, and ill-humour, and vanity
‘ of that young person ; but he has some talent, and is
‘ a man of honour, and has dispositions of amendment,
‘ in which he has been aided by a little subsequent
‘ experience, and may turn out well. Therefore, use

‘ your government interest for him, for he is improved
‘ and improvable.

‘ Yours, &c.’

LETTER 295.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *La Mira, near Venice, June 18th, 1817.*

‘ Inclosed is a letter to *Dr. Holland* from *Pinde-*
‘ *monte*. Not knowing the doctor’s address, I am de-
‘ sired to inquire, and perhaps, being a literary man,
‘ you will know or discover his haunt near some popu-
‘ lous churchyard. I have written to you a scolding
‘ letter—I believe, upon a misapprehended passage in
‘ your letter—but never mind : it will do for next time,
‘ and you will surely deserve it. Talking of doctors
‘ reminds me once more to recommend to you one who
‘ will not recommend himself,—the Doctor Polidori.
‘ If you can help him to a publisher, do ; or, if you
‘ have any sick relation, I would advise his advice : all
‘ the patients he had in Italy are dead—Mr. * *’s son,
‘ Mr. Horner, and Lord G * *, whom he embowelled
‘ with great success at Pisa.

‘ Remember me to Moore, whom I congratulate.
‘ How is Rogers? and what is become of Campbell
‘ and all t’other fellows of the Druid order? I got
‘ Maturin’s Bedlam at last, but no other parcel ; I am
‘ in fits for the tooth-powder, and the magnesia. I
‘ want some of Burkitt’s *Soda-powders*. Will you tell
‘ Mr. Kinnaird that I have written him two letters on
‘ pressing business (about Newstead, &c.), to which I
‘ humbly solicit his attendance. I am just returned
‘ from a gallop along the banks of the Brenta—time,
‘ sunset.

‘ Yours,

‘ B.’

LETTER 286.

TO MR. MURRAY.

' La Mira, near Venice, July 1st, 1817.

' Since my former letter, I have been working up
' my impressions into a *Fourth* Canto of Childe Ha-
' rold, of which I have roughened off about rather bet-
' ter than thirty stanzas, and mean to go on; and pro-
' bably to make this "Fytte" the concluding one of
' the poem, so that you may propose against the
' autumn to draw out the conscription for 1818. You
' must provide moneys, as this new resumption bodes
' you certain disbursements. Somewhere about the
' end of September or October, I propose to be under
' way (i. e. in the press); but I have no idea yet of
' the probable length or calibre of the Canto, or what
' it will be good for; but I mean to be as mercenary
' as possible, an example (I do not mean of any indi-
' vidual in particular, and least of all any person or
' persons of our mutual acquaintance) which I should
' have followed in my youth, and I might still have
' been a prosperous gentleman.

' No tooth-powder, no letters, no recent tidings of
' you.

' Mr. Lewis is at Venice, and I am going up to stay
' a week with him there—as it is one of his enthusiasms
' also to like the city.

' I stood in Venice on the "Bridge of Sighs," &c. &c.

' The "Bridge of Sighs" (i. e. Ponte de'i Sospiri) is
' that which divides, or rather joins the palace of the
' Doge to the prison of the state. It has two passages:
' the criminal went by the one to judgment, and re-
' turned by the other to death, being strangled in a
' chamber adjoining, where there was a mechanical
' process for the purpose.

‘ This is the first stanza of our new Canto; and now
 ‘ for a line of the second :

‘ In Venice, Tasso’s echoes are no more,
 ‘ And silent rows the songless gondolier,
 ‘ Her palaces, &c. &c.

‘ You know that formerly the gondoliers sung
 ‘ always, and Tasso’s Gierusalemme was their ballad.
 ‘ Venice is built on seventy-two islands.

‘ There ! there’s a brick of your new Babel ! and
 ‘ now, sirrah ! what say you to the sample ?

‘ Yours, &c.

‘ P.S. I shall write again by and by.’

LETTER 287.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *La Mira, near Venice, July 8th, 1817.*

‘ If you can convey the inclosed letter to its
 ‘ address, or discover the person to whom it is directed,
 ‘ you will confer a favour upon the Venetian creditor
 ‘ of a deceased Englishman. This epistle is a dun
 ‘ to his executor, for house-rent. The name of the
 ‘ insolvent defunct is, or was, *Porter Valter*, according
 ‘ to the account of the plaintiff, which I rather suspect
 ‘ ought to be *Walter Porter*, according to our mode of
 ‘ collocation. If you are acquainted with any dead
 ‘ man of the like name a good deal in debt, pray dig
 ‘ him up, and tell him that “ a pound of his fair flesh ”
 ‘ or the ducats are required, and that “ if you deny
 ‘ them, fie upon your law ! ”

‘ I hear nothing more from you about Moore’s poem,
 ‘ Rogers, or other literary phenomena ; but to-morrow,
 ‘ being post-day, will bring perhaps some tidings. I
 ‘ write to you with people talking Venetian all about,
 ‘ so that you must not expect this letter to be all
 ‘ English.

‘ The other day, I had a squabble on the highway
‘ as follows: I was riding pretty quickly from Dolo
‘ home about eight in the evening, when I passed a
‘ party of people in a hired carriage, one of whom,
‘ poking his head out of the window, began bawling to
‘ me in an inarticulate but insolent manner. I wheeled
‘ my horse round, and overtaking, stopped the coach,
‘ and said, “ Signor, have you any commands for me?”
‘ He replied, impudently as to manner, “ No.” I then
‘ asked him what he meant by that unseemly noise, to
‘ the discomfiture of the passers-by. He replied by
‘ some piece of impertinence, to which I answered by
‘ giving him a violent slap in the face. I then dis-
‘ mounted (for this passed at the window, I being on
‘ horseback still), and opening the door desired him to
‘ walk out, or I would give him another. But the
‘ first had settled him except as to words, of which he
‘ poured forth a profusion in blasphemies, swearing
‘ that he would go to the police and avouch a battery
‘ sans provocation. I said he lied, and was a * *, and,
‘ if he did not hold his tongue, should be dragged out
‘ and beaten anew. He then held his tongue. I of
‘ course told him my name and residence, and defied
‘ him to the death, if he were a gentleman, or not a
‘ gentleman, and had the inclination to be genteel in
‘ the way of combat. He went to the police, but there
‘ having been bystanders in the road,—particularly a
‘ soldier, who had seen the business,—as well as my
‘ servant, notwithstanding the oaths of the coachman
‘ and five insides besides the plaintiff, and a good deal
‘ of paying on all sides, his complaint was dismissed,
‘ he having been the aggressor;—and I was subse-
‘ quently informed that, had I not given him a blow,
‘ he might have been had into durance.

‘ So set down this,—“ that in Aleppo once ” I “ beat
 ‘ a Venetian;” but I assure you that he deserved it,
 ‘ for I am a quiet man, like Candide, though with
 ‘ somewhat of his fortune in being forced to forego my
 ‘ natural meekness every now and then. Yours, &c.
 ‘ B.’

LETTER 288.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ Venice, July 9th, 1817.

‘ I have got the sketch and extracts from Lalla
 ‘ Rookh. The plan, as well as the extracts I have
 ‘ seen, please me very much indeed, and I feel impa-
 ‘ tient for the whole.

‘ With regard to the critique on “ Manfred,” you
 ‘ have been in such a devil of a hurry, that you have
 ‘ only sent me the half: it breaks off at page 294.
 ‘ Send me the rest; and also page 270, where there
 ‘ is “ an account of the supposed origin of this dread-
 ‘ ful story,”—in which, by the way, whatever it may
 ‘ be, the conjecturer is out, and knows nothing of the
 ‘ matter. I had a better origin than he can devise or
 ‘ divine, for the soul of him.

‘ You say nothing of Manfred’s luck in the world;
 ‘ and I care not. He is one of the best of my mis-
 ‘ begotten, say what they will.

‘ I got at last an extract, but *no parcels*. They will
 ‘ come, I suppose, some time or other. I am come up
 ‘ to Venice for a day or two to bathe, and am just going
 ‘ to take a swim in the Adriatic; so, good evening—
 ‘ the post waits. Yours, &c.

‘ B.’

‘ P.S. Pray, was Manfred’s speech to *the Sun* still
 ‘ retained in Act Third? I hope so: it was one of the
 ‘ best in the thing, and better than the Colosseum. I

‘ have done *fifty-six* of Canto Fourth, Childe Harold;
 ‘ so down with your ducats.’

LETTER 289.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *La Mira, Venice, July 10th, 1817.*

‘ Murray, the Mokanna of booksellers, has con-
 ‘ trived to send me extracts from Lalla Rookh by the
 ‘ post. They are taken from some magazine, and
 ‘ contain a short outline and quotations from the two
 ‘ first Poems. I am very much delighted with what is
 ‘ before me, and very thirsty for the rest. You have
 ‘ caught the colours as if you had been in the rainbow,
 ‘ and the tone of the East is perfectly preserved. I am
 ‘ glad you have changed the title from “ Persian
 ‘ Tale.”

‘ I suspect you have written a devilish fine composi-
 ‘ tion, and I rejoice in it from my heart; because “ the
 ‘ Douglas and the Percy both together are confident
 ‘ against a world in arms.” I hope you won’t be
 ‘ affronted at my looking on us as “ birds of a feather;”
 ‘ though on whatever subject you had written, I should
 ‘ have been very happy in your success.

‘ There is a simile of an orange tree’s “ flowers and
 ‘ fruits,” which I should have liked better, if I did not
 ‘ believe it to be a reflection on * * *

‘ Do you remember Thurlow’s poem to Sam—“ *When*
 ‘ *Rogers;*” and that d—d supper of Rancliffe’s that
 ‘ ought to have been a *dinner*? “ Ah, Master Shallow,
 ‘ we have heard the chimes at midnight.” But

‘ My boat is on the shore
 ‘ And my bark is on the sea;
 ‘ But, before I go, Tom Moore,
 ‘ Here’s a double health to thee!

‘ Here’s a sigh to those who love me,
‘ And a smile to those who hate;
‘ And whatever sky’s above me,
‘ Here’s a heart for every fate.

‘ Though the ocean roar around me,
‘ Yet it still shall bear me on;
‘ Though a desert should surround me,
‘ It hath springs that may be won.

‘ Were’t the last drop in the well,
‘ As I gasp’d upon the brink,
‘ Ere my fainting spirit fell,
‘ ’Tis to thee that I would drink.

‘ With that water, as this wine,
‘ The libation I would pour,
‘ Should be—peace with thine and mine,
‘ And a health to thee, Tom Moore.

‘ This should have been written fifteen moons ago—
‘ the first stanza was. I am just come out from an
‘ hour’s swim in the Adriatic; and I write to you
‘ with a black-eyed Venetian girl before me, reading
‘ Boccacio.

‘ Last week I had a row on the road (I came up to
‘ Venice from my casino, a few miles on the Paduan
‘ road, this blessed day, to bathe) with a fellow in a
‘ carriage, who was impudent to my horse. I gave
‘ him a swingeing box on the ear, which sent him to
‘ the police, who dismissed his complaint. Witnesses
‘ had seen the transaction. He first shouted, in an
‘ unseemly way, to frighten my palfry. I wheeled
‘ round, rode up to the window, and asked him what
‘ he meant. He grinned, and said some foolery, which
‘ produced him an immediate slap in the face, to his
‘ utter discomfiture. Much blasphemy ensued, and
‘ some menace, which I stopped by dismounting
‘ and opening the carriage door, and intimating an
‘ intention of mending the road with his imme-

‘ diate remains, if he did not hold his tongue. He
 ‘ held it.

‘ Monk Lewis is here—“how pleasant*!” He is a
 ‘ very good fellow, and very much yours. So is Sam
 ‘ —so is every body—and amongst the number,

‘ Yours ever,

‘ B.

‘ P.S. What think you of Manfred?’

LETTER 290.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *La Mira, near Venice, July 15th, 1817.*

‘ I have finished (that is, written—the file comes
 ‘ afterwards) ninety and eight stanzas of the Fourth
 ‘ Canto, [which I mean to be the concluding one. It
 ‘ will probably be about the same length as the *Third*,
 ‘ being already of the dimensions of the first or second
 ‘ Cantos. I look upon parts of it as very good, that
 ‘ is, if the three former are good, but this we shall
 ‘ see; and at any rate, good or not, it is rather a dif-
 ‘ ferent style from the last—less metaphysical—which,
 ‘ at any rate, will be a variety. I sent you the shaft
 ‘ of the column as a specimen the other day, i. e. the
 ‘ first stanza. So you may be thinking of its arrival
 ‘ towards autumn, whose winds will not be the only
 ‘ ones to be raised, if *so be as how that* it is ready by
 ‘ that time.

‘ I lent Lewis, who is at Venice (in or on the Canal-
 ‘ accio, the Grand Canal), your extracts from Lalla
 ‘ Rookh and Manuel†, and, out of contradiction, it
 ‘ may be, he likes the last, and is not much taken with
 ‘ the first, of these performances. Of Manuel, I think,

* An allusion (such as often occurs in these letters) to an anecdote with which he had been amused.

† A tragedy, by the Rev. Mr. Maturin.

‘ with the exception of a few capers, it is as heavy a
 ‘ nightmare as was ever bestrode by indigestion.

‘ Of the extracts I can but judge as extracts, and
 ‘ I prefer the “Peri” to the “Silver Veil.” He
 ‘ seems not so much at home in his versification of the
 ‘ “Silver Veil,” and a little embarrassed with his
 ‘ horrors; but the conception of the character of the
 ‘ impostor is fine, and the plan of great scope for his
 ‘ genius,—and I doubt not that, as a whole, it will
 ‘ be very Arabesque and beautiful.

‘ Your late epistle is not the most abundant in in-
 ‘ formation, and has not yet been succeeded by any
 ‘ other; so that I know nothing of your own concerns,
 ‘ or of any concerns, and as I never hear from anybody
 ‘ but yourself who does not tell me something as dis-
 ‘ agreeable as possible, I should not be sorry to hear
 ‘ from you: and as it is not very probable,—if I can,
 ‘ by any device or possible arrangement with regard
 ‘ to my personal affairs, so arrange it,—that I shall
 ‘ return soon, or reside ever in England, all that you
 ‘ tell me will be all I shall know or inquire after, as to
 ‘ our beloved realm of Grub-street, and the black bre-
 ‘ thren and blue sisterhood of that extensive suburb of
 ‘ Babylon. Have you had no new babe of literature
 ‘ sprung up to replace the dead, the distant, the tired,
 ‘ and the *retired*? no prose, no verse, no *nothing*?’

LETTER 291.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, July 20th, 1817.*

‘ I write to give you notice that I have completed
 ‘ the *fourth* and *ultimate* Canto of Childe Harold. It
 ‘ consists of 126 stanzas, and is consequently the
 ‘ longest of the four. It is yet to be copied and
 ‘ polished; and the notes are to come, of which it

‘ will require more than the *third* Canto, as it neces-
‘ sarily treats more of works of art than of nature. It
‘ shall be sent towards autumn;—and now for our
‘ barter. What do you bid? eh? you shall have sam-
‘ ples, an’ it so please you: but I wish to know what
‘ I am to expect (as the saying is) in these hard times,
‘ when poetry does not let for half its value. If you
‘ are disposed to do what Mrs. Winifred Jenkins calls
‘ “the handsome thing,” I may perhaps throw you
‘ some odd matters to the lot,—translations, or slight
‘ originals; there is no saying what may be on the
‘ anvil between this and the booking season. Recol-
‘ lect that it is the *last* Canto, and completes the work;
‘ whether as good as the others, I cannot judge, in
‘ course—least of all as yet,—but it shall be as little
‘ worse as I can help. I may, perhaps, give some
‘ little gossip in the notes as to the present state of
‘ Italian literati and literature, being acquainted with
‘ some of their *capi*—men as well as books;—but this
‘ depends upon my humour at the time. So, now,
‘ pronounce: I say nothing.

‘ When you have got the whole *four* Cantos, I think
‘ you might venture on an edition of the whole poem
‘ in quarto, with spare copies of the two last for the
‘ purchasers of the old edition of the first two. There
‘ is a hint for you, worthy of the Row; and now, per-
‘ pend—pronounce.

‘ I have not received a word from you of the fate of
‘ “Manfred” or “Tasso,” which seems to me odd,
‘ whether they have failed or succeeded.

‘ As this is a scrawl of business, and I have lately
‘ written at length and often on other subjects, I will
‘ only add that I am, &c.’

LETTER 292.

TO MR. MURRAY.

' La Mira, near Venice, August 7th, 1817.

' Your letter of the 18th, and, what will please
' you, as it did me, the parcel sent by the good-natured
' aid and abetment of Mr. Croker, are arrived.—
' Messrs. Lewis and Hobhouse are here: the former
' in the same house, the latter a few hundred yards
' distant.

' You say nothing of Manfred, from which its failure
' may be inferred; but I think it odd you should not
' say so at once. I know nothing, and hear absolutely
' nothing, of anybody or anything in England; and
' there are no English papers, so that all you say will
' be news—of any person, or thing, or things. I am
' at present very anxious about Newstead, and sorry
' that Kinnaird is leaving England at this minute,
' though I do not tell him so, and would rather he
' should have *his* pleasure, although it may not in this
' instance tend to my profit.

' If I understand rightly, you have paid into Mor-
' land's 1500 *pounds*: as the agreement in the paper
' is two thousand *guineas*, there will remain therefore
' *six* hundred *pounds*, and not five hundred, the odd
' hundred being the extra to make up the specie. Six
' hundred and thirty pounds will bring it to the like
' for Manfred and Tasso, making a total of twelve
' hundred and thirty, I believe, for I am not a good
' calculator. I do not wish to press you, but I tell you
' fairly that it will be a convenience to me to have it
' paid as soon as it can be made convenient to yourself.

' The new and last Canto is 130 stanzas in length;
' and may be made more or less. I have fixed no
' price, even in idea, and have no notion of what it

‘ may be good for. There are no metaphysics in it ;
‘ at least, I think not. Mr. Hobhouse has promised
‘ me a copy of Tasso’s Will, for notes ; and I have
‘ some curious things to say about Ferrara, and
‘ Parisina’s story, and perhaps a farthing candle’s
‘ worth of light upon the present state of Italian
‘ literature. I shall hardly be ready by October ; but
‘ that don’t matter. I have all to copy and correct,
‘ and the notes to write.

‘ I do not know whether Scott will like it ; but I
‘ have called him the “ *Ariosto* of the North ” in my
‘ text. *If he should not, say so in time.*

‘ An Italian translation of “ Glenarvon ” came lately
‘ to be printed at Venice. The censor (S^r. Petrotini)
‘ refused to sanction the publication till he had seen
‘ me on the subject. I told him that I did not recog-
‘ nize the slightest relation between that book and
‘ myself ; but that, whatever opinions might be upon
‘ that subject, *I* would never prevent or oppose the
‘ publication of *any* book, in *any* language, on my own
‘ private account ; and desired him (against his incli-
‘ nation) to permit the poor translator to publish his
‘ labours. It is going forwards in consequence. You
‘ may say this, with my compliments, to the author.

‘ Yours.’

LETTER 293.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, August 12th, 1817.*

‘ I have been very sorry to hear of the death of
‘ Madame de Staël, not only because she had been
‘ very kind to me at Copet, but because now I can
‘ never requite her. In a general point of view, she
‘ will leave a great gap in society and literature.

‘ With regard to death, I doubt that we have any
‘ right to pity the dead for their own sakes.

‘ The copies of Manfred and Tasso are arrived,
‘ thanks to Mr. Croker’s cover. You have destroyed
‘ the whole effect and moral of the poem by omitting
‘ the last line of Manfred’s speaking; and why this
‘ was done, I know not. Why you persist in saying
‘ nothing of the thing itself, I am equally at a loss to
‘ conjecture. If it is for fear of telling me something
‘ disagreeable, you are wrong; because sooner or later
‘ I must know it, and I am not so new, nor so raw, nor
‘ so inexperienced, as not to be able to bear, not the
‘ mere paltry, petty disappointments of authorship,
‘ but things more serious,—at least I hope so, and
‘ that what you may think irritability is merely me-
‘ chanical, and only acts like galvanism on a dead
‘ body, or the muscular motion which survives sensa-
‘ tion.

‘ If it is that you are out of humour, because I wrote
‘ to you a sharp letter, recollect that it was partly from
‘ a misconception of your letter, and partly because
‘ you did a thing you had no right to do without con-
‘ sulting me.

‘ I have, however, heard good of Manfred from two
‘ other quarters, and from men who would not be scru-
‘ pulous in saying what they thought, or what was said;
‘ and so “good morrow to you, good Master Lieute-
‘ nant.”

‘ I wrote to you twice about the 4th Canto, which
‘ you will answer at your pleasure. Mr. Hobhouse and
‘ I have come up for a day to the city; Mr. Lewis is
‘ gone to England; and I am

‘ Yours.’

LETTER 294.

TO MR. MURRAY.

La Mira, near Venice, August 21st, 1817.

‘ I take you at your word about Mr. Hanson, and
‘ will feel obliged if you will go to him, and request Mr.
‘ Davies also to visit him by my desire, and repeat that
‘ I trust that neither Mr. Kinnaird’s absence nor mine
‘ will prevent his taking all proper steps to accelerate
‘ and promote the sale of Newstead and Rochdale, upon
‘ which the whole of my future personal comfort de-
‘ pends. It is impossible for me to express how much
‘ any delays upon these points would inconvenience
‘ me; and I do not know a greater obligation that
‘ can be conferred upon me than the pressing these
‘ things upon Hanson, and making him act according
‘ to my wishes. I wish you would *speak out*, at least
‘ to *me*, and tell me what you allude to by your cold
‘ way of mentioning him. All mysteries at such a
‘ distance are not merely tormenting but mischievous,
‘ and may be prejudicial to my interests; so, pray ex-
‘ pound, that I may consult with Mr. Kinnaird when
‘ he arrives; and remember that I prefer the most
‘ disagreeable certainties to hints and inuendoes. The
‘ devil take everybody: I never can get any person to
‘ be explicit about anything or anybody, and my
‘ whole life is passed in conjectures of what people
‘ mean: you all talk in the style of C * * L * *’s
‘ novels.

‘ It is not Mr. St. John, but *Mr. St. Aubyn*, son of
‘ Sir John St. Aubyn. *Polidori* knows him, and in-
‘ troduced him to me. He is of Oxford, and has got
‘ my parcel. The doctor will ferret him out, or ought.
‘ The parcel contains many letters, some of Madame
‘ de Staël’s, and other people’s, besides MSS., &c.
‘ By —, if I find the gentleman, and he don’t find

‘ the parcel, I will say something he won’t like to
‘ hear.

‘ You want a “civil and delicate declension” for
‘ the medical tragedy? Take it—

‘ Dear Doctor, I have read your play,
‘ Which is a good one in its way,—
‘ Purges the eyes and moves the bowels,
‘ And drenches handkerchiefs like towels
‘ With tears, that, in a flux of grief,
‘ Afford hysterical relief
‘ To shatter’d nerves and quicken’d pulses,
‘ Which your catastrophe convulses.
‘ I like your moral and machinery;
‘ Your plot, too, has such scope for scenery!
‘ Your dialogue is apt and smart;
‘ The play’s concoction full of art;
‘ Your hero raves, your heroine cries,
‘ All stab, and everybody dies.
‘ In short, your tragedy would be
‘ The very thing to hear and see:
‘ And for a piece of publication,
‘ If I decline on this occasion,
‘ It is not that I am not sensible
‘ To merits in themselves ostensible,
‘ But—and I grieve to speak it—plays
‘ Are drugs, mere drugs, sir—now-a-days.
‘ I had a heavy loss by “Manuel,”—
‘ Too lucky if it prove not annual,—
‘ And S * *, with his “Orestes,”
‘ (Which, by-the-by, the author’s best is,)
‘ Has lain so very long on hand
‘ That I despair of all demand.
‘ I’ve advertised, but see my books,
‘ Or only watch my shopman’s looks;—
‘ Still Ivan, Ina, and such lumber,
‘ My back-shop glut, my shelves encumber.
‘ There’s Byron too, who once did better,
‘ Has sent me, folded in a letter,
‘ A sort of—it’s no more a drama
‘ Than Darnley, Ivan, or Kehama;
‘ So alter’d since last year his pen is,
‘ I think he’s lost his wits at Venice.
‘ In short, sir, what with one and t’other,
‘ I dare not venture on another.

‘ I write in haste ; excuse each blunder ;
 ‘ The coaches through the street so thunder !
 ‘ My room’s so full—we’ve Gifford here
 ‘ Reading MS., with Hookham Frere,
 ‘ Pronouncing on the nouns and particles
 ‘ Of some of our forthcoming Articles.
 ‘ The Quarterly—Ah, sir, if you
 ‘ Had but the genius to review!—
 ‘ A smart critique upon St. Helena,
 ‘ Or if you only would but tell in a
 ‘ Short compass what——but, to resume :
 ‘ As I was saying, sir, the room—
 ‘ The room’s so full of wits and bards,
 ‘ Crabbes, Campbells, Crokers, Freres, and Wards,
 ‘ And others, neither bards nor wits :—
 ‘ My humble tenement admits
 ‘ All persons in the dress of gent.,
 ‘ From Mr. Hammond to Dog Dent.
 ‘ A party dines with me to-day,
 ‘ All clever men, who make their way ;
 ‘ They’re at this moment in discussion
 ‘ On poor De Staël’s late dissolution.
 ‘ Her book, they say, was in advance—
 ‘ Pray Heaven, she tell the truth of France !
 ‘ Thus run our time and tongues away.—
 ‘ But, to return, sir, to your play :
 ‘ Sorry, sir, but I cannot deal,
 ‘ Unless ’twere acted by O’Neill.
 ‘ My hands so full, my head so busy,
 ‘ I’m almost dead, and always dizzy ;
 ‘ And so, with endless truth and hurry,
 ‘ Dear Doctor, I am yours,

‘ JOHN MURRAY.

‘ P.S. I’ve done the fourth and last Canto, which
 ‘ amounts to 133 stanzas. I desire you to name a
 ‘ price ; if you don’t, *I* will ; so I advise you in time.

‘ Yours, &c.

‘ There will be a good many notes.’

Among those minor misrepresentations of which it was Lord Byron’s fate to be the victim, advantage was,

at this time, taken of his professed distaste to the English, to accuse him of acts of inhospitality, and even rudeness, towards some of his fellow-countrymen. How far different was his treatment of all who ever visited him, many grateful testimonies might be collected to prove; but I shall here content myself with selecting a few extracts from an account given me by Mr. Henry Joy of a visit which, in company with another English gentleman, he paid to the noble poet this summer, at his villa on the banks of the Brenta. After mentioning the various civilities they had experienced from Lord Byron, and, among others, his having requested them to name their own day for dining with him,—‘ We availed ourselves,’ says Mr. Joy, ‘ of this
‘ considerate courtesy by naming the day fixed for our
‘ return to Padua, when our route would lead us to his
‘ door; and we were welcomed with all the cordiality
‘ which was to be expected from so friendly a bidding.
‘ Such traits of kindness in such a man deserve to be
‘ recorded on account of the numerous slanders thrown
‘ upon him by some of the tribes of tourists, who
‘ resented as a personal affront his resolution to avoid
‘ their impertinent inroads upon his retirement. So
‘ far from any appearance of indiscriminate aversion to
‘ his countrymen, his inquiries about his friends in
‘ England (*quorum pars magna fuisti*) were most anxious
‘ and particular.

‘ He expressed some opinions,’ continues my informant, ‘ on matters of taste, which cannot fail to
‘ interest his biographer. He contended that Sculpture, as an art, was vastly superior to Painting;—a
‘ preference which is strikingly illustrated by the fact
‘ that, in the fourth Canto of Childe Harold, he gives
‘ the most elaborate and splendid account of several

‘ statues, and none of any pictures ; although Italy is,
‘ emphatically, the land of Painting, and her best
‘ statues are derived from Greece. By the way, he told
‘ us that there were more objects of interest in Rome
‘ alone than in all Greece from one extremity to the
‘ other. After regaling us with an excellent dinner,
‘ (in which, by the by, a very English joint of roast
‘ beef showed that he did not extend his antipathies to
‘ all John-Bullisms,) he took me in his carriage some
‘ miles of our route towards Padua, after apologizing to
‘ my fellow-traveller for the separation, on the score of
‘ his anxiety to hear all he could of his friends in
‘ England; and I quitted him with a confirmed im-
‘ pression of the strong ardour and sincerity of his
‘ attachment to those by whom he did not fancy him-
‘ self slighted or ill-treated.’

LETTER 295.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ Sept. 4th, 1817.

‘ Your letter of the 15th has conveyed with its
‘ contents the impression of a seal, to which the
‘ “ Saracen’s Head ” is a seraph, and the “ Bull and
‘ Mouth ” a delicate device. I knew that calumny had
‘ sufficiently *blackened* me of later days, but not that
‘ it had given the features as well as complexion of a
‘ negro. Poor Augusta is not less, but rather more,
‘ shocked than myself, and says “ people seem to have
‘ lost their recollection strangely ” when they engraved
‘ such a “ blackamoor.” Pray don’t seal (at least to
‘ me) with such a caricature of the human numskull
‘ altogether; and if you don’t break the seal-cutter’s
‘ head, at least crack his libel (or likeness, if it should
‘ be a likeness) of mine.

‘ Mr. Kinnaird is not yet arrived, but expected. He

‘ has lost by the way all the tooth-powder, as a letter
‘ from Spa informs me.

‘ By Mr. Rose I received safely, though tardily,
‘ magnesia and tooth-powder, and * * * *. Why do
‘ you send me such trash—worse than trash, the Sub-
‘ lime of Mediocrity? Thanks for Lalla, however,
‘ which is good; and thanks for the Edinburgh and
‘ Quarterly, both very amusing and well-written. Paris
‘ in 1815, &c.—good. Modern Greece—good for
‘ nothing; written by some one who has never been
‘ there, and not being able to manage the Spenser
‘ stanza, has invented a thing of his own, consisting of
‘ two elegiac stanzas, an heroic line, and an Alexan-
‘ drine, twisted on a string. Besides, why “*modern?*”
‘ You may say *modern Greeks*, but surely *Greece* itself
‘ is rather more ancient than ever it was. Now for
‘ business.

‘ You offer 1500 guineas for the new Canto: I won’t
‘ take it. I ask two thousand five hundred guineas
‘ for it, which you will either give or not, as you think
‘ proper. It concludes the poem, and consists of 144
‘ stanzas. The notes are numerous, and chiefly written
‘ by Mr. Hobhouse, whose researches have been inde-
‘ fatigable, and who, I will venture to say, has more
‘ real knowledge of Rome and its environs than any
‘ Englishman who has been there since Gibbon. By
‘ the way, to prevent any mistakes, I think it neces-
‘ sary to state the fact that *he*, Mr. Hobhouse, has no
‘ interest whatever in the price or profit to be derived
‘ from the copyright of either poem or notes directly
‘ or indirectly; so that you are not to suppose that it
‘ is by, for, or through him, that I require more for
‘ this Canto than the preceding.—No: but if Mr.
‘ Eustace was to have had two thousand for a poem on

‘ Education; if Mr. Moore is to have three thousand
 ‘ for Lalla, &c. ; if Mr. Campbell is to have three thou-
 ‘ sand for his prose on poetry—I don’t mean to dis-
 ‘ parage these gentlemen in their labours—but I ask
 ‘ the aforesaid price for mine. You will tell me that
 ‘ their productions are considerably *longer* : very true,
 ‘ and when they shorten them, I will lengthen mine,
 ‘ and ask less. You shall submit the MS. to Mr.
 ‘ Gifford, and any other two gentlemen to be named
 ‘ by you (Mr. Frere, or Mr. Croker, or whomever you
 ‘ please, except such fellows as your * * s and * * s),
 ‘ and if they pronounce this Canto to be inferior as a
 ‘ *whole* to the preceding, I will not appeal from their
 ‘ award, but burn the manuscript, and leave things as
 ‘ they are. Yours very truly.

‘ P.S. In answer to a former letter, I sent you a
 ‘ short statement of what I thought the state of our
 ‘ present copyright account, viz., six hundred *pounds*
 ‘ still (or lately) due on Childe Harold, and six hun-
 ‘ dred *guineas*, Manfred and Tasso, making a total of
 ‘ twelve hundred and thirty pounds. If we agree
 ‘ about the new poem, I shall take the liberty to reserve
 ‘ the choice of the manner in which it should be pub-
 ‘ lished, viz. a quarto, certes.’

LETTER 296.

TO MR. HOPPNER.

‘ *La Mira*, Sept. 12th, 1817.

‘ I set out yesterday morning with the intention
 ‘ of paying my respects, and availing myself of your
 ‘ permission to walk over the premises*. On arriving

* A country-house on the Euganean hills, near Este, which Mr. Hoppner, who was then the English Consul-General at Venice, had for some time occupied, and which Lord Byron afterwards rented of him, but never resided in it.

‘ at Padua, I found that the march of the Austrian
‘ troops had engrossed so many horses*, that those I
‘ could procure were hardly able to crawl; and their
‘ weakness, together with the prospect of finding none
‘ at all at the post-house of Monselice, and consequently
‘ either not arriving that day at Este, or so late as to
‘ be unable to return home the same evening, induced
‘ me to turn aside in a second visit to Arqua, instead
‘ of proceeding onwards; and even thus I hardly got
‘ back in time.

‘ Next week I shall be obliged to be in Venice to
‘ meet Lord Kinnaird and his brother, who are expected
‘ in a few days. And this interruption, together with
‘ that occasioned by the continued march of the Aus-
‘ trians for the next few days, will not allow me to fix
‘ any precise period for availing myself of your kind-
‘ ness, though I should wish to take the earliest
‘ opportunity. Perhaps, if absent, you will have the
‘ goodness to permit one of your servants to show me
‘ the grounds and house, or as much of either as may be
‘ convenient; at any rate, I shall take the first occa-
‘ sion possible to go over, and regret very much that
‘ I was yesterday prevented.

‘ I have the honour to be your obliged, &c.’

* So great was the demand for horses, on the line of march of the Austrians, that all those belonging to private individuals were put in requisition for their use, and Lord Byron himself received an order to send his for the same purpose. This, however, he positively refused to do, adding, that if an attempt were made to take them by force, he would shoot them through the head in the middle of the road, rather than submit to such an act of tyranny upon a foreigner who was merely a temporary resident in the country. Whether his answer was ever reported to the higher authorities I know not; but his horses were suffered to remain unmolested in his stables.

LETTER 297.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *September 15th, 1817.*

‘ I enclose a sheet for correction, if ever you get
‘ to another edition. You will observe that the blun-
‘ der in printing makes it appear as if the Chateau
‘ was *over* St. Gingo, instead of being on the opposite
‘ shore of the Lake, over Clarens. So, separate the
‘ paragraphs, otherwise my *topography* will seem as
‘ inaccurate as your *typography* on this occasion.

‘ The other day I wrote to convey my proposition
‘ with regard to the fourth and concluding Canto. I
‘ have gone over and extended it to one hundred and
‘ fifty stanzas, which is almost as long as the two first
‘ were originally, and longer by itself than any of the
‘ smaller poems except the “*Corsair*.” Mr. Hobhouse
‘ has made some very valuable and accurate notes of
‘ considerable length, and you may be sure that I will
‘ do for the text all that I can to finish with decency.
‘ I look upon *Childe Harold* as my best; and as I
‘ begun, I think of concluding with it. But I make
‘ no resolutions on that head, as I broke my former
‘ intention with regard to the “*Corsair*.” However, I
‘ fear that I shall never do better; and yet, not being
‘ thirty years of age, for some moons to come, one
‘ ought to be progressive as far as intellect goes for
‘ many a good year. But I have had a devilish deal
‘ of tear and wear of mind and body in my time, be-
‘ sides having published too often and much already.
‘ God grant me some judgment to do what may be
‘ most fitting in that and everything else, for I doubt
‘ my own exceedingly.

‘ I have read “*Lalla Rookh*,” but not with sufficient
‘ attention yet, for I ride about, and lounge, and pon-

‘ der, and—two or three other things; so that my
‘ reading is very desultory, and not so attentive as it
‘ used to be. I am very glad to hear of its popularity,
‘ for Moore is a very noble fellow in all respects, and
‘ will enjoy it without any of the bad feelings which
‘ success—good or evil—sometimes engenders in the
‘ men of rhyme. Of the Poem itself, I will tell you
‘ my opinion when I have mastered it: I say of the
‘ *Poem*, for I don’t like the *prose* at all; and in the
‘ meantime, the “Fire-worshippers” is the best, and
‘ the “Veiled Prophet” the worst, of the volume.

‘ With regard to poetry in general*, I am convinced,
‘ the more I think of it, that he and *all* of us—Scott,
‘ Southey, Wordsworth, Moore, Campbell, I,—are all
‘ in the wrong, one as much as another; that we are
‘ upon a wrong revolutionary poetical system, or sys-
‘ tems, not worth a damn in itself, and from which
‘ none but Rogers and Crabbe are free; and that the
‘ present and next generations will finally be of this
‘ opinion. I am the more confirmed in this by having
‘ lately gone over some of our classics, particularly
‘ *Pope*, whom I tried in this way.—I took Moore’s
‘ poems and my own and some others, and went over
‘ them side by side with Pope’s, and I was really
‘ astonished (I ought not to have been so) and mor-
‘ tified at the ineffable distance in point of sense, learn-
‘ ing, effect, and even *imagination*, passion, and *inven-*
‘ *tion*, between the little Queen Anne’s man, and us of
‘ the Lower Empire. Depend upon it, it is all Horace
‘ then, and Claudian now, among us; and if I had
‘ to begin again, I would mould myself accordingly.

* On this paragraph, in the MS. copy of the above letter, I find the following note, in the handwriting of Mr. Gifford:—‘ There is more good sense, and feeling, and judgment in this passage, than in any other I ever read, or Lord Byron wrote.’

‘ Crabbe’s the man, but he has got a coarse and im-
 ‘ practicable subject, and * * * is retired upon half-pay,
 ‘ and has done enough, unless he were to do as he did
 ‘ formerly.’

LETTER 298.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ September 17th, 1817.

‘ Mr. Hobhouse purposes being in England in
 ‘ November; he will bring the Fourth Canto with
 ‘ him, notes and all; the text contains one hundred
 ‘ and fifty stanzas, which is long for that measure.

‘ With regard to the “Ariosto of the North,” surely
 ‘ their themes, chivalry, war, and love, were as like as
 ‘ can be; and as to the compliment, if you knew what
 ‘ the Italians think of Ariosto, you would not hesitate
 ‘ about that. But as to their “measures,” you forget
 ‘ that Ariosto’s is an octave stanza, and Scott’s any-
 ‘ thing but a stanza. If you think Scott will dislike
 ‘ it, say so, and I will expunge. I do not call him
 ‘ the “*Scotch* Ariosto,” which would be sad *provincial*
 ‘ eulogy, but the “Ariosto of the *North*,” meaning of
 ‘ all *countries* that are *not* the *South*. * * *

‘ As I have recently troubled you rather frequently,
 ‘ I will conclude, repeating that I am

‘ Yours ever, &c.’

LETTER 299.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ October 12th, 1817.

‘ Mr. Kinnaird and his brother, Lord Kinnaird,
 ‘ have been here, and are now gone again. All your
 ‘ missives came, except the tooth-powder, of which I
 ‘ request further supplies, at all convenient oppor-
 ‘ tunities; as also of magnesia and soda-powders, both
 ‘ great luxuries here, and neither to be had good, or
 ‘ indeed hardly at all of the natives. * *

‘ In **’s Life, I perceive an attack upon the then
‘ Committee of D. L. Theatre for acting Bertram, and
‘ an attack upon Maturin’s Bertram for being acted.
‘ Considering all things, this is not very grateful nor
‘ graceful on the part of the worthy autobiographer ;
‘ and I would answer, if I had *not* obliged him. Put-
‘ ting my own pains to forward the views of ** out of
‘ the question, I know that there was every disposition,
‘ on the part of the Sub-Committee, to bring forward
‘ any production of his, were it feasible. The play
‘ he offered, though poetical, did not appear at all
‘ practicable, and Bertram did ;—and hence this long
‘ tirade, which is the last chapter of his vagabond life.

‘ As for Bertram, Maturin may defend his own be-
‘ gotten, if he likes it well enough ; I leave the Irish
‘ clergyman and the new orator Henley to battle it out
‘ between them, satisfied to have done the best I could
‘ for *both*. I may say this to *you*, who know it.

‘ Mr. * * may console himself with the fervour,—
‘ the almost religious fervour of his and W * *’s disci-
‘ ples, as he calls it. If he means that as any proof of
‘ their merits, I will find him as much “fervour” in
‘ behalf of Richard Brothers and Joanna Southcote
‘ as ever gathered over his pages or round his fire-
‘ side.

‘ My answer to your proposition about the Fourth
‘ Canto you will have received, and I await yours ;—
‘ perhaps we may not agree. I have since written a
‘ Poem (of 84 octave stanzas), humorous, in or after
‘ the excellent manner of Mr. Whistlecraft (whom I
‘ take to be Frere), on a Venetian anecdote which
‘ amused me :—but till I have your answer, I can say
‘ nothing more about it.

‘ Mr. Hobhouse does not return to England in No-

‘ vember, as he intended, but will winter here; and
‘ as he is to convey the poem, or poems,—for there
‘ may perhaps be more than the two mentioned (which,
‘ by the way, I shall not perhaps include in the same
‘ publication or agreement), I shall not be able to
‘ publish so soon as expected; but I suppose there is
‘ no harm in the delay.

‘ I have *signed* and sent your former *copyrights* by
‘ Mr. Kinnaird, but *not* the *receipt*, because the money
‘ is not yet paid. Mr. Kinnaird has a power of attor-
‘ ney to sign for me, and will, when necessary.

‘ Many thanks for the Edinburgh Review, which is
‘ very kind about Manfred, and defends its originality,
‘ which I did not know that anybody had attacked. I
‘ *never read*, and do not know that I ever saw, the
‘ “Faustus of Marlow,” and had, and have, no dramatic
‘ works by me in English, except the recent things
‘ you sent me; but I heard Mr. Lewis translate ver-
‘ bally some scenes of *Goethe’s Faust* (which were,
‘ some good, and some bad) last summer;—which is
‘ all I know of the history of that magical personage;
‘ and as to the germs of Manfred, they may be found
‘ in the Journal which I sent to Mrs. Leigh (part of
‘ which you saw) when I went over first the Dent de
‘ Jaman, and then the Wengen or Wengeberg Alp
‘ and Sheideck, and made the giro of the Jungfrau,
‘ Shreckhorn, &c. &c. shortly before I left Switzerland.
‘ I have the whole scene of Manfred before me as if it
‘ was but yesterday, and could point it out, spot by
‘ spot, torrent and all.

‘ Of the Prometheus of Æschylus I was passionately
‘ fond as a boy (it was one of the Greek plays we read
‘ thrice a year at Harrow);—indeed that and the
‘ “Medea” were the only ones, except the “Seven

* A paper in the Edinburgh Magazine, in which it was suggested that the general conception of Manfred, and much of what is excellent in the manner of its execution, had been borrowed from 'the Tragical History of Dr. Faustus,' of Marlow.

LETTER 300.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, October 23d, 1817.*

‘ Your two letters are before me, and our bargain is
‘ so far concluded. How sorry I am to hear that Gif-
‘ ford is unwell ! Pray tell me he is better : I hope it
‘ is nothing but *cold*. As you say his illness originates
‘ in cold, I trust it will get no further.

‘ Mr. Whistlecraft has no greater admirer than my-
‘ self : I have written a story in 89 stanzas, in imita-
‘ tion of him, called *Beppo* (the short name for Giu-
‘ seppe, that is, the *Joe* of the Italian Joseph), which
‘ I shall throw you into the balance of the Fourth
‘ Canto, to help you round to your money ; but you
‘ perhaps had better publish it anonymously ; but this
‘ we will see to by-and-by.

‘ In the Notes to Canto Fourth, Mr. Hobhouse has
‘ pointed out *several errors* of *Gibbon*. You may de-
‘ pend upon H.’s research and accuracy. You may
‘ print it in what shape you please.

‘ With regard to a future large Edition, you may
‘ print all, or anything, except “English Bards,” to
‘ the republication of which at *no* time will I consent.
‘ I would not reprint them on any consideration. I
‘ don’t think them good for much, even in point of
‘ poetry ; and, as to other things, you are to recollect
‘ that I gave up the publication on account of the *Hol-*
‘ *lands*, and I do not think that any time or circum-
‘ stances can neutralize the suppression. Add to
‘ which, that, after being on terms with almost all the
‘ bards and critics of the day, it would be savage at
‘ any time, but worst of all *now*, to revive this foolish
‘ lampoon.

‘ The review of *Manfred* came very safely, and I
‘ am much pleased with it. It is odd that they should

‘ and *noli me tangere* ; but these prose fellows are
 ‘ worst, after all, about their little comforts. •

‘ Do you remember my mentioning, some months
 ‘ ago, the Marquis Moncada—a Spaniard of distinc-
 ‘ tion and fourscore years, my summer neighbour at
 ‘ La Mira? Well, about six weeks ago, he fell in
 ‘ love with a Venetian girl of family, and no fortune or
 ‘ character; took her into his mansion; quarrelled with
 ‘ all his former friends for giving him advice (except
 ‘ me who gave him none), and installed her present
 ‘ concubine and future wife and mistress of himself
 ‘ and furniture. At the end of a month, in which she
 ‘ demeaned herself as ill as possible, he found out a
 ‘ correspondence between her and some former keeper,
 ‘ and after nearly strangling, turned her out of the
 ‘ house, to the great scandal of the keeping part of the
 ‘ town, and with a prodigious *éclat*, which has occu-
 ‘ pied all the canals and coffee-houses in Venice. He
 ‘ said she wanted to poison him; and she says—God
 ‘ knows what; but between them they have made a
 ‘ great deal of noise. I know a little of both the par-
 ‘ ties: Moncada seemed a very sensible old man, a
 ‘ character which he has not quite kept up on this
 ‘ occasion; and the woman is rather showy than pretty.
 ‘ For the honour of religion, she was bred in a con-
 ‘ vent, and for the credit of Great Britain, taught by an
 ‘ Englishwoman. ‘ Yours, &c.’

LETTER 302.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, December 3d, 1817.*

‘ A Venetian lady, learned and somewhat stricken
 ‘ in years, having, in her intervals of love and devo-
 ‘ tion, taken upon her to translate the Letters and
 ‘ write the Life of Lady Mary Wortley Montague,—to

‘ which undertaking there are two obstacles, firstly,
‘ ignorance of English, and, secondly, a total dearth of
‘ information on the subject of her projected biogra-
‘ phy,—has applied to me for facts or falsities upon
‘ this promising project. Lady Montague lived the
‘ last twenty or more years of her life in or near
‘ Venice, I believe; but here they know nothing, and
‘ remember nothing, for the story of to-day is suc-
‘ ceeded by the scandal of to-morrow; and the wit,
‘ and beauty, and gallantry, which might render your
‘ countrywoman notorious in her own country, must
‘ have been *here* no great distinction—because the first
‘ is in no request, and the two latter are common to
‘ all women, or at least the last of them. If you can
‘ therefore tell me anything, or get anything told, of
‘ Lady Wortley Montague, I shall take it as a favour;
‘ and will transfer and translate it to the “Dama” in
‘ question. And I pray you besides to send me, by
‘ some quick and safe voyager, the edition of her
‘ Letters, and the stupid Life, by *Dr. Dallaway*, pub-
‘ lished by her proud and foolish family.

‘ The death of the Princess Charlotte has been a
‘ shock even here, and must have been an earthquake
‘ at home. The Courier’s list of some three hundred
‘ heirs to the crown (including the house of Wirtem-
‘ berg, with that * * *, P——, of disreputable memory,
‘ whom I remember seeing at various balls during the
‘ visit of the Muscovites, &c. in 1814) must be very
‘ consolatory to all true lieges, as well as foreigners,
‘ except Signor Travis, a rich Jew merchant of this
‘ city, who complains grievously of the length of British
‘ mourning, which has countermanded all the silks
‘ which he was on the point of transmitting, for a year
‘ to come. The death of this poor girl is melancholy

‘ in every respect, dying at twenty or so, in childbed—
 ‘ of a *boy* too, a present princess and future queen, and
 ‘ just as she began to be happy, and to enjoy herself
 ‘ and the hopes which she inspired.

‘ I think, as far as I can recollect, she is the first
 ‘ royal defunct in childbed upon record in *our* history.
 ‘ I feel sorry in every respect—for the loss of a female
 ‘ reign, and a woman hitherto harmless; and all the
 ‘ lost rejoicings, and addresses, and drunkenness, and
 ‘ disbursements, of John Bull on the occasion.

‘ The Prince will marry again, after divorcing his
 ‘ wife, and Mr. Southey will write an elegy now, and
 ‘ an ode then; the Quarterly will have an article
 ‘ against the press, and the Edinburgh an article, *half*
 ‘ and *half*, about reform and right of divorce; the
 ‘ British will give you Dr. Chalmers’s funeral sermon
 ‘ much commended, with a place in the stars for
 ‘ deceased royalty; and the Morning Post will have
 ‘ already yelled forth its “syllables of dolour.”

‘ Woe, woe, Nealliny!—the young Nealliny!

‘ It is some time since I have heard from you: are
 ‘ you in bad humour? I suppose so. I have been so
 ‘ myself, and it is your turn now, and by and by mine
 ‘ will come round again. Yours truly,

‘ B.

‘ P.S. Countess Albrizzi, come back from Paris, has
 ‘ brought me a medal of himself, a present from Denon
 ‘ to me, and a likeness of Mr. Rogers (belonging to
 ‘ her), by Denon also.’

LETTER 303.

TO MR. HOPPNER.

‘ Venice, December 15th, 1817.

‘ I should have thanked you before, for your
 ‘ favour a few days ago, had I not been in the inten-

‘ tion of paying my respects, personally, this evening,
 ‘ from which I am deterred by the recollection that
 ‘ you will probably be at the Count Goess’s this even-
 ‘ ing, which has made me postpone my intrusion.

‘ I think your Elegy a remarkably good one, not
 ‘ only as a composition, but both the politics and
 ‘ poetry contain a far greater portion of truth and gene-
 ‘ rosity than belongs to the times, or to the professors
 ‘ of these opposite pursuits, which usually agree only in
 ‘ one point, as extremes meet. I do not know whether
 ‘ you wished me to retain the copy, but I shall retain
 ‘ it till you tell me otherwise; and am very much
 ‘ obliged by the perusal.

‘ My own sentiments on Venice, &c. such as they
 ‘ are, I had already thrown into verse last summer, in
 ‘ the Fourth Canto of Childe Harold, now in prepara-
 ‘ tion for the press; and I think much more highly of
 ‘ them, for being in coincidence with yours.

‘ Believe me yours, &c.’

LETTER 304.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, January 8th, 1818.*

‘ My dear Mr. Murray,
 ‘ You’re in a damn’d hurry
 ‘ To set up this ultimate Canto;
 ‘ But (if they don’t rob us)
 ‘ You’ll see Mr. Hobhouse
 ‘ Will bring it safe in his portmanteau.
 ‘ For the Journal you hint of,
 ‘ As ready to print off,
 ‘ No doubt you do right to commend it;
 ‘ But as yet I have writ off
 ‘ The devil a bit of
 ‘ Our “Beppo;”—when copied, I’ll send it.
 ‘ Then you’ve * * * Tour,—
 ‘ No great things, so be sure,
 ‘ You could hardly begin with a less work;

‘ For the pompous rascallion,
 ‘ Who don’t speak Italian
 ‘ Nor French, must have scribbled by guess-work.

 ‘ You can make any loss up
 ‘ With “Spence” and his gossip,
 ‘ A work which must surely succeed ;
 ‘ Then Queen Mary’s Epistle-craft,
 ‘ With the new “Fytte” of “Whistlecraft,”
 ‘ Must make people purchase and read.

 ‘ Then you’ve General Gordon,
 ‘ Who girded his sword on,
 ‘ To serve with a Muscovite master,
 ‘ And help him to polish
 ‘ A nation so owlsh,
 ‘ They thought shaving their beards a disaster.

 ‘ For the man, “*poor and shrewd* *,”
 ‘ With whom you’d conclude
 ‘ A compact without more delay,
 ‘ Perhaps some such pen is
 ‘ Still extant in Venice ;
 ‘ But please, sir, to mention *your pay*.’

LETTER 305.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, January 19th, 1818.*

‘ I send you the Story† in three other separate
 ‘ covers. It won’t do for your Journal, being full of
 ‘ political allusions. *Print alone, without name* ; alter
 ‘ nothing ; get a scholar to see that the *Italian phrases*
 ‘ are correctly published (your printing, by the way,
 ‘ always makes me ill with its eternal blunders, which
 ‘ are incessant), and God speed you. Hobhouse left
 ‘ Venice a fortnight ago, saving two days. I have
 ‘ heard nothing of or from him.

‘ Yours, &c.

‘ He has the whole of the MSS. ; so put up prayers
 ‘ in your back shop, or in the printer’s “Chapel.”’

* ‘ Vide your letter.’

† Beppo.

LETTER 306.

TO MR. MURRAY.

' Venice, January 27th, 1818.

' My father—that is, my Armenian father, Padre
' Pasquali—in the name of all the other fathers of our
' Convent, sends you the enclosed, greeting.

' Inasmuch as it has pleased the translators of the
' long-lost and lately-found portions of the text of
' Eusebius to put forth the enclosed prospectus, of
' which I send six copies, you are hereby implored to
' obtain subscribers in the two Universities, and among
' the learned, and the unlearned who would unlearn
' their ignorance.—This *they* (the Convent) request, I
' request, and *do you* request.

' I sent you Beppo some weeks ago. You must
' publish it alone; it has politics and ferocity, and
' won't do for your isthmus of a Journal.

' Mr. Hobhouse, if the Alps have not broken his
' neck, is, or ought to be, swimming with my com-
' mentaries and his own coat of mail in his teeth and
' right hand, in a cork jacket, between Calais and
' Dover.

' It is the height of the Carnival, and I am in the
' extreme and agonies of a new intrigue with I don't
' exactly know whom or what, except that she is in-
' satiate of love, and won't take money, and has light
' hair and blue eyes, which are not common here,
' and that I met her at the Masque, and that when her
' mask is off, I am as wise as ever. I shall make what
' I can of the remainder of my youth.'

LETTER 307.

TO MR. MOORE.

' Venice, February 2nd, 1818.

' Your letter of December 8th arrived but this
' day, by some delay, common but inexplicable. Your

‘ domestic calamity is very grievous, and I feel with
 ‘ you as much as I *dare* feel at all. Throughout life,
 ‘ your loss must be my loss, and your gain my gain;
 ‘ and, though my heart may ebb, there will always be
 ‘ a drop for you among the dregs.

‘ I know how to feel with you, because (selfishness
 ‘ being always the substratum of our damnable clay)
 ‘ I am quite wrapt up in my own children. Besides
 ‘ my little legitimate, I have made unto myself an
 ‘ *illegitimate* since (to say nothing of one before*), and
 ‘ I look forward to one of these as the pillar of my old
 ‘ age, supposing that I ever reach—which I hope I
 ‘ never shall—that desolating period. ‘ I have a great
 ‘ love for my little Ada, though perhaps she may tor-
 ‘ ture me, like * * *.

‘ Your offered address will be as acceptable as you
 ‘ can wish. I don’t much care what the wretches of
 ‘ the world think of me—all *that’s* past. But I care
 ‘ a good deal what *you* think of me, and, so, say what
 ‘ you like. You *know* that I am not sullen; and, as
 ‘ to being *savage*, such things depend on circumstances.
 ‘ However, as to being in good-humour in *your* society,
 ‘ there is no great merit in that, because it would be
 ‘ an effort, or an insanity, to be otherwise.

‘ I don’t know what Murray may have been saying
 ‘ or quoting†. I called Crabbe and Sam the fathers

* This possibly may have been the subject of the Poem given in page 134 of the First Volume.

† Having seen by accident the passage in one of his letters to Mr. Murray, in which he denounces, as false and worthless, the poetical system on which the greater number of his cotemporaries, as well as himself, founded their reputation, I took an opportunity, in the next letter I wrote to him, of jesting a little on this opinion and his motives for it. It was, no doubt (I ventured to say), excellent policy in him, who had made sure of his own immortality in this style of writing, thus to throw overboard all us poor devils, who were embarked with him. He was in fact, I added, behaving towards us much in the manner of the methodist

‘ of present Poesy ; and said, that I thought—except
‘ them—all of “ *us youth* ” were on a wrong tack. But
‘ I never said that we did not sail well. Our fame
‘ will be hurt by *admiration* and *imitation*. When I
‘ say *our*, I mean *all* (Lakers included), except the
‘ postscript of the Augustans. The next generation
‘ (from the quantity and facility of imitation) will
‘ tumble and break their necks off our Pegasus, who
‘ runs away with us ; but we keep the *saddle*, because
‘ we broke the rascal and can ride. But though easy
‘ to mount, he is the devil to guide ; and the next
‘ fellows must go back to the riding-school and the
‘ manège, and learn to ride the “ great horse.”

‘ Talking of horses, by the way, I have transported
‘ my own, four in number, to the Lido (*beach*, in Eng-
‘ lish), a strip of some ten miles along the Adriatic, a
‘ mile or two from the city ; so that I not only get a
‘ row in my gondola, but a spanking gallop of some
‘ miles daily along a firm and solitary beach, from the
‘ fortress to Malamocco, the which contributes consi-
‘ derably to my health and spirits.

‘ I have hardly had a wink of sleep this week past.
‘ We are in the agonies of the Carnival’s last days, and
‘ I must be up all night again, as well as to-morrow. I
‘ have had some curious masking adventures this Car-
‘ nival, but, as they are not yet over, I shall not say
‘ on. I will work the mine of my youth to the last
‘ veins of the ore, and then—good night. I have
‘ lived, and am content.

‘ Hobhouse went away before the Carnival began,
‘ so that he had little or no fun. Besides, it requires

preacher who said to his congregation—‘ You may think, at the Last
‘ Day, to get to heaven by laying hold on my skirts ; but I’ll cheat you
‘ all, for I’ll wear a spencer, I’ll wear a spencer!’

‘ some time to be thoroughgoing with the Venetians ;
‘ but of all this anon, in some other letter.

‘ I must dress for the evening. There is an opera
‘ and ridotto, and I know not what, besides balls ; and
‘ so, ever and ever yours, ‘ B.

‘ P.S. I send this without revision, so excuse
‘ errors. I delight in the fame and fortune of Lalla,
‘ and again congratulate you on your well-merited
‘ success.’

Of his daily rides on the Lido, which he mentions in this letter, the following account, by a gentleman who lived a good deal with him at Venice, will be found not a little interesting :—

‘ Almost immediately after Mr. Hobhouse’s departure, Lord Byron proposed to me to accompany him
‘ in his rides on the Lido. One of the long narrow
‘ islands which separate the Lagune, in the midst of
‘ which Venice stands, from the Adriatic, is more
‘ particularly distinguished by this name. At one
‘ extremity is a fortification, which, with the Castle of
‘ St. Andrea on an island on the opposite side, defends
‘ the nearest entrance to the city from the sea. In
‘ times of peace this fortification is almost dismantled,
‘ and Lord Byron had hired here of the Commandant
‘ an unoccupied stable, where he kept his horses. The
‘ distance from the city was not very considerable ;
‘ it was much less than to the Terra Firma, and,
‘ as far as it went, the spot was not ineligible for
‘ riding.

‘ Every day that the weather would permit, Lord
‘ Byron called for me in his gondola, and we found
‘ the horses waiting for us outside of the fort. We
‘ rode as far as we could along the seashore, and then

‘ on a kind of dyke, or embankment, which has been
‘ raised where the island was very narrow, as far as
‘ another small fort about half way between the prin-
‘ cipal one which I have already mentioned, and the
‘ town or village of Malamocco, which is near the other
‘ extremity of the island,—the distance between the
‘ two forts being about three miles.

‘ On the land side of the embankment, not far from
‘ the smaller fort, was a boundary stone which proba-
‘ bly marked some division of property,—all the side
‘ of the island nearest the Lagoon being divided into
‘ gardens for the cultivation of vegetables for the Ve-
‘ netian markets. At the foot of this stone Lord Byron
‘ repeatedly told me that I should cause him to be
‘ interred, if he should die in Venice, or its neighbour-
‘ hood, during my residence there; and he appeared
‘ to think, as he was not a Catholic, that, on the part
‘ of the government, there could be no obstacle to his
‘ interment in an unhallowed spot of ground by the
‘ seaside. At all events, I was to overcome whatever
‘ difficulties might be raised on this account. I was,
‘ by no means, he repeatedly told me, to allow his
‘ body to be removed to England, nor permit any of
‘ his family to interfere with his funeral.

‘ Nothing could be more delightful than these rides
‘ on the Lido were to me. We were from half to three
‘ quarters of an hour crossing the water, during which
‘ his conversation was always most amusing and inter-
‘ esting. Sometimes he would bring with him any
‘ new book he had received, and read to me the
‘ passages which most struck him. Often he would
‘ repeat to me whole stanzas of the Poems he was
‘ engaged in writing, as he had composed them on the
‘ preceding evening; and this was the more interesting

‘ to me, because I could frequently trace in them some
‘ idea which he had started in our conversation of the
‘ preceding day, or some remark, the effect of which
‘ he had been evidently trying upon me. Occasionally
‘ too, he spoke of his own affairs, making me repeat
‘ all I had heard with regard to him, and desiring that
‘ I would not spare him, but let him know the worst
‘ that was said.’

LETTER 308.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, Feb. 20th, 1818.*

‘ I have to thank Mr. Croker for the arrival, and
‘ you for the contents, of the parcel which came last
‘ week, much quicker than any before, owing to Mr.
‘ Croker’s kind attention and the official exterior of the
‘ bags; and all safe, except much friction amongst the
‘ magnesia, of which only two bottles came entire;
‘ but it is all very well, and I am exceedingly obliged
‘ to you.

‘ The books I have read, or rather am reading.
‘ Pray, who may be the Sexagenarian, whose gossip
‘ is very amusing? Many of his sketches I recognise,
‘ particularly Gifford, Mackintosh, Drummond, Dutens,
‘ H. Walpole, Mrs. Inchbald, Opie, &c., with the
‘ Scotts, Loughborough, and most of the divines and
‘ lawyers, besides a few shorter hints of authors, and
‘ a few lines about a certain “*noble author*,” charac-
‘ terised as malignant and sceptical, according to the
‘ good old story, “as it was in the beginning, is now,
‘ but *not* always shall be:” do you know such a person,
‘ Master Murray? eh?—And pray, of the booksellers,
‘ which be *you*? the dry, the dirty, the honest, the
‘ opulent, the finical, the splendid, or the coxcomb

‘ bookseller? Stap my vitals, but the author grows
‘ scurrilous in his grand climacteric !

‘ I remember to have seen Porson at Cambridge, in
‘ the hall of our college, and in private parties, but not
‘ frequently ; and I never can recollect him except as
‘ drunk or brutal, and generally both : I mean in an
‘ evening, for in the hall he dined at the Dean’s table,
‘ and I at the Vice-master’s, so that I was not near
‘ him ; and he then and there appeared sober in his
‘ demeanour, nor did I ever hear of excess or outrage
‘ on his part in public,—commons, college, or chapel ;
‘ but I have seen him in a private party of under-
‘ graduates, many of them freshmen and strangers,
‘ take up a poker to one of them, and heard him use
‘ language as blackguard as his action. I have seen
‘ Sheridan drunk, too, with all the world ; but his
‘ intoxication was that of Bacchus, and Porson’s that
‘ of Silenus. Of all the disgusting brutes, sulky,
‘ abusive, and intolerable, Porson was the most bestial,
‘ as far as the few times that I saw him went, which
‘ were only at William Bankes’s (the Nubian disco-
‘ verer’s) rooms. I saw him once go away in a rage,
‘ because nobody knew the name of the “Cobbler of
‘ Messina,” insulting their ignorance with the most
‘ vulgar terms of reprobation. He was tolerated in
‘ this state amongst the young men for his talents, as
‘ the Turks think a madman inspired, and bear with
‘ him. He used to recite, or rather vomit pages of all
‘ languages, and could hiccup Greek like a Helot ; and
‘ certainly Sparta never shocked her children with a
‘ grosser exhibition than this man’s intoxication.

‘ I perceive, in the book you sent me, a long account
‘ of him, which is very savage. I cannot judge, as I
‘ never saw him sober, except in *hall* or combination-

‘ room ; and then I was never near enough to hear,
 ‘ and hardly to see him. Of his drunken deportment,
 ‘ I can be sure, because I saw it.

‘ With the Reviews I have been much entertained.
 ‘ It requires to be as far from England as I am to relish
 ‘ a periodical paper properly : it is like soda-water in
 ‘ an Italian summer. But what cruel work you make
 ‘ with Lady * * * ! You should recollect that she is
 ‘ a woman ; though, to be sure, they are now and then
 ‘ very provoking ; still, as authoresses, they can do no
 ‘ great harm ; and I think it a pity so much good in-
 ‘ vective should have been laid out upon her, when
 ‘ there is such a fine field of us Jacobin gentlemen for
 ‘ you to work upon.

‘ I heard from Moore lately, and was sorry to be
 ‘ made aware of his domestic loss. Thus it is—
 ‘ “medio de fonte leporum”—in the acmé of his fame
 ‘ and his happiness comes a drawback as usual.

‘ Mr. Hoppner, whom I saw this morning, has been
 ‘ made the father of a very fine boy*.—Mother and
 ‘ child doing very well indeed. By this time Hob-
 ‘ house should be with you, and also certain packets,
 ‘ letters, &c. of mine, sent since his departure.—I am

* On the birth of this child, who was christened John William Rizzo, Lord Byron wrote the four following lines, which are in no other respect remarkable than that they were thought worthy of being metrically translated into no less than ten different languages ; namely, Greek, Latin, Italian (also in the Venetian dialect), German, French, Spanish, Illyrian, Hebrew, Armenian, and Samaritan :—

‘ His father’s sense, his mother’s grace
 ‘ In him, I hope, will always fit so ;
 ‘ With (still to keep him in good case)
 ‘ The health and appetite of Rizzo.”

The original lines, with the different versions just mentioned, were printed, in a small neat volume (which now lies before me), in the Seminary of Padua.

‘ not at all well in health within this last eight days.
‘ My remembrances to Gifford and all friends.

‘ Yours, &c.

B.’

‘ P.S. In the course of a month or two, Hanson will
‘ have probably to send off a clerk with conveyances
‘ to sign (Newstead being sold in November last for
‘ ninety-four thousand five hundred pounds), in which
‘ case I supplicate supplies of articles as usual, for
‘ which, desire Mr. Kinnaird to settle from funds in
‘ their bank, and deduct from my account with him.

‘ P.S. To-morrow night I am going to see “Otello,”
‘ an opera from our “Othello,” and one of Rossini’s
‘ best, it is said. It will be curious to see in Venice
‘ the Venetian story itself represented, besides to dis-
‘ cover what they will make of Shakspeare in music.’

LETTER 309.

TO MR. HOPPNER.

‘ *Venice, February 28th, 1818.*

‘ My dear Sir,

‘ Our friend, il Conte M., threw me into a cold
‘ sweat last night, by telling me of a menaced version
‘ of Manfred (in Venetian, I hope, to complete the
‘ thing) by some Italian, who had sent it to you for
‘ correction, which is the reason why I take the liberty
‘ of troubling you on the subject. If you have any
‘ means of communication with the man, would you
‘ permit me to convey to him the offer of any price he
‘ may obtain or think to obtain for his project, pro-
‘ vided he will throw his translation into the fire*, and

* Having ascertained that the utmost this translator could expect to make by his manuscript was 200 francs, Lord Byron offered him that sum, if he would desist from publishing. The Italian, however, held out for more; nor could he be brought to terms, till it was intimated to him pretty plainly from Lord Byron that, should the publication be per-

‘ promise not to undertake any other of that or any
 ‘ other of *my* things: I will send his money imme-
 ‘ diately on this condition.

‘ As I did not write *to* the Italians, nor *for* the Ita-
 ‘ lians, nor *of* the Italians (except in a poem not yet
 ‘ published, where I have said all the good I know or
 ‘ do not know of them, and none of the harm), I con-
 ‘ fess I wish that they would let me alone, and not
 ‘ drag me into their arena as one of the gladiators, in
 ‘ a silly contest which I neither understand nor have
 ‘ ever interfered with, having kept clear of all their
 ‘ literary parties, both here and at Milan, and else-
 ‘ where.—I came into Italy to feel the climate and be
 ‘ quiet, if possible. Mossi’s translation I would have
 ‘ prevented if I had known it, or could have done so;
 ‘ and I trust that I shall yet be in time to stop this
 ‘ new gentleman, of whom I heard yesterday for the
 ‘ first time. He will only hurt himself, and do no
 ‘ good to his party, for in *party* the whole thing origi-
 ‘ nates. Our modes of thinking and writing are so
 ‘ unutterably different, that I can conceive no greater
 ‘ absurdity than attempting to make any approach
 ‘ between the English and Italian poetry of the pre-
 ‘ sent day. I like the people very much, and their
 ‘ literature very much, but I am not the least ambi-
 ‘ tious of being the subject of their discussions literary

sisted in, he would horsewhip him the very first time they met. Being but little inclined to suffer martyrdom in the cause, the translator accepted the 200 francs and delivered up his manuscript, entering at the same time into a written engagement never to translate any other of the noble poet’s works.

Of the qualifications of this person as a translator of English poetry, some idea may be formed from the difficulty he found himself under respecting the meaning of a line in the Incantation in *Manfred*,—‘ And the wisp on the morass,’—which he requested of Mr. Hoppner to expound to him, not having been able to find in the dictionaries to which he had access any other signification of the word ‘ wisp’ than ‘ a bundle of straw.’

‘ and personal (which appear to be pretty much the
‘ same thing, as is the case in most countries); and if
‘ you can aid me in impeding this publication, you
‘ will add to much kindness already received from you
‘ by yours,

‘ Ever and truly,

‘ BYRON.

‘ P.S. How is *the* son, and mamma? Well, I dare
say.’

LETTER 310.

TO MR. ROGERS.

‘ *Venice, March 3d, 1818.*

‘ I have not, as you say, “ taken to wife the
‘ Adriatic.” I heard of Moore’s loss from himself in
‘ a letter which was delayed upon the road three
‘ months. I was sincerely sorry for it, but in such
‘ cases what are words?

‘ The villa you speak of is one at Este, which Mr.
‘ Hoppner (Consul-general here) has transferred to
‘ me. I have taken it for two years as a place of
‘ Villeggiatura. The situation is very beautiful indeed,
‘ among the Euganean hills, and the house very fair.
‘ The vines are luxuriant to a great degree, and all the
‘ fruits of the earth abundant. It is close to the old
‘ castle of the Estes, or Guelphs, and within a few
‘ miles of Arqua, which I have visited twice, and hope
‘ to visit often.

‘ Last summer (except an excursion to Rome) I
‘ passed upon the Brenta. In Venice I winter, trans-
‘ porting my horses to the Lido, bordering the Adriatic
‘ (where the fort is), so that I get a gallop of some
‘ miles daily along the strip of beach which reaches to
‘ Malamocco, when in health; but within these few
‘ weeks I have been unwell. At present I am getting
‘ better. The Carnival was short, but a good one. I

‘ don’t go out much, except during the time of masques ;
‘ but there are one or two conversazioni, where I go
‘ regularly, just to keep up the system ; as I had
‘ letters to their givers ; and they are particular on
‘ such points ; and now and then, though very rarely,
‘ to the Governor’s.

‘ It is a very good place for women. I like the
‘ dialect and their manner very much. There is a
‘ *naïveté* about them which is very winning, and the
‘ romance of the place is a mighty adjunct ; the *bel*
‘ *sangue* is not, however, now amongst the *dame* or
‘ higher orders ; but all under *i fuzzioli*, or kerchiefs
‘ (a white kind of veil which the lower orders wear
‘ upon their heads) ;—the *vesta zendale*, or old national
‘ female costume is no more. The city, however, is
‘ decaying daily, and does not gain in population.
‘ However, I prefer it to any other in Italy ; and here
‘ have I pitched my staff, and here do I purpose to
‘ reside for the remainder of my life, unless events,
‘ connected with business not to be transacted out of
‘ England, compel me to return for that purpose ;
‘ otherwise I have few regrets, and no desires to visit
‘ it again for its own sake. I shall probably be obliged
‘ to do so, to sign papers for my affairs, and a proxy
‘ for the Whigs, and to see Mr. Waite, for I can’t find
‘ a good dentist here, and every two or three years one
‘ ought to consult one. About seeing my children I
‘ must take my chance. One I shall have sent here ;
‘ and I shall be very happy to see the legitimate one,
‘ when God pleases, which he perhaps will some day
‘ or other. As for my mathematical * * *, I am as well
‘ without her.

‘ Your account of your visit to Fonthill is very
‘ striking : could you beg of *him* for *me* a copy in MS.

‘ of the remaining *Tales**? I think I deserve them, as a
‘ strenuous and public admirer of the first one. I will
‘ return it when read, and make no ill use of the copy,
‘ if granted. Murray would send me out anything
‘ safely. If ever I return to England, I should like
‘ very much to see the author, with his permission. In
‘ the mean time, you could not oblige me more than
‘ by obtaining me the perusal I request, in French or
‘ English,—all’s one for that, though I prefer Italian
‘ to either. I have a French copy of *Vathek*, which
‘ I bought at Lausanne. I can read French with great
‘ pleasure and facility, though I neither speak nor
‘ write it. Now Italian I *can* speak with some fluency,
‘ and write sufficiently for my purposes, but I don’t
‘ like their *modern* prose at all; it is very heavy, and
‘ so different from Machiavelli.

‘ They say Francis is Junius;—I think it looks like
‘ it. I remember meeting him at Earl Grey’s at dinner.
‘ Has not he lately married a young woman; and was
‘ not he Madame Talleyrand’s *cavaliere servente* in India
‘ years ago?

‘ I read my death in the papers, which was not
‘ true. I see they are marrying the remaining single-
‘ ness of the royal family. They have brought out
‘ Fazio with great and deserved success at Covent-
‘ garden: that’s a good sign. I tried, during the direc-
‘ tory, to have it done at Drury-lane, but was over-
‘ ruled. If you think of coming into this country, you
‘ will let me know perhaps beforehand. I suppose
‘ Moore won’t move. Rose is here. I saw him the

* A continuation of *Vathek*, by the author of that very striking and powerful production. The ‘*Tales*’ of which this unpublished sequel consists are, I understand, those supposed to have been related by the Princes in the Hall of Eblis.

‘ other night at Madame Albrizzi’s ; he talks of return-
 ‘ ing in May. My love to the Hollands.

‘ Ever, &c.

‘ P.S. They have been crucifying Othello into an
 ‘ opera (*Otello*, by Rossini): the music good, but lugu-
 ‘ brious ; but as for the words, all the real scenes with
 ‘ Iago cut out, and the greatest nonsense instead ; the
 ‘ handkerchief turned into a *billet-doux*, and the first
 ‘ singer would not *black* his face, for some exquisite
 ‘ reasons assigned in the preface. Singing, dresses,
 ‘ and music, very good.’

LETTER 311.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *Venice, March 16th, 1818.*

‘ My dear Tom,

‘ Since my last, which I hope that you have re-
 ‘ ceived, I have had a letter from our friend Samuel.
 ‘ He talks of Italy this summer—won’t you come with
 ‘ him ? I don’t know whether you would like our
 ‘ Italian way of life or not.

‘ They are an odd people. The other day I was
 ‘ telling a girl, “ You must not come to-morrow, be-
 ‘ cause Margueritta is coming at such a time,”—(they
 ‘ are both about five feet ten inches high, with great
 ‘ black eyes and fine figures—fit to breed gladiators
 ‘ from—and I had some difficulty to prevent a battle
 ‘ upon a *rencontre* once before),—“ unless you promise
 ‘ to be friends, and ”—the answer was an interruption,
 ‘ by a declaration of war against the other, which she
 ‘ said would be a “ *Guerra di Candia*.” Is it not odd,
 ‘ that the lower order of Venetians should still allude
 ‘ proverbially to that famous contest, so glorious and
 ‘ so fatal to the Republic ?

‘ They have singular expressions, like all the Italians.

‘ For example, “ Viscere ”—as we would say, “ my
 ‘ love,” or “ my heart,” as an expression of tenderness.
 ‘ Also, “ I would go for you into the midst of a hun-
 ‘ dred *knives*.”—“ *Mazza ben*,” excessive attachment,—
 ‘ literally, “ I wish you well even to killing.” Then
 ‘ they say (instead of our way, “ do you think I would
 ‘ do you so much harm?”) “ do you think I would
 ‘ *assassinate* you in such a manner?”—“ *Tempo per-
 ‘ fido*,” bad weather; “ *Strade perfide*,” bad roads,—
 ‘ with a thousand other allusions and metaphors, taken
 ‘ from the state of society and habits in the middle
 ‘ ages.

‘ I am not so sure about *mazza*, whether it don’t
 ‘ mean *massa*, i. e. a great deal, a *mass*, instead of the
 ‘ interpretation I have given it. But of the other
 ‘ phrases I am sure.

‘ Three o’ th’ clock—I must “ to bed, to bed, to bed,”
 ‘ as mother S * * (that tragical friend of the mathema-
 ‘ tical * * *) says.

‘ Have you ever seen—I forget what or whom—no
 ‘ matter. They tell me Lady Melbourne is very un-
 ‘ well. I shall be so sorry. She was my greatest
 ‘ *friend*, of the feminine gender:—when I say “ friend,”
 ‘ I mean *not* mistress, for that’s the antipode. Tell me
 ‘ all about you and everybody—how Sam is—how you
 ‘ like your neighbours, the Marquis and Marchesa,
 ‘ &c. &c. ‘ Ever, &c.’

LETTER 312.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, March 25th, 1818.*

‘ I have your letter, with the account of “ Beppo,”
 ‘ for which I sent you four new stanzas a fortnight
 ‘ ago, in case you print, or reprint.

‘ Croker’s is a good guess; but the style is not

‘ English, it is Italian ;—Berni is the original of *all*.
 ‘ Whistlecraft was *my* immediate *model* ! Rose’s “ Ani-
 ‘ mali” I never saw till a few days ago,—they are
 ‘ excellent. But (as I said above) Berni is the father
 ‘ of that kind of writing, which, I think, suits our lan-
 ‘ guage, too, very well;—we shall see by the experi-
 ‘ ment. If it does, I shall send you a volume in a year
 ‘ or two, for I know the Italian way of life well, and
 ‘ in time may know it yet better ; and as for the verse
 ‘ and the passions, I have them still in tolerable vigour.
 ‘ If you think that it will do you and the work, or
 ‘ works, any good, you may put my name to it ; *but*
 ‘ *first consult the knowing ones*. It will, at any rate,
 ‘ show them that I can write cheerfully, and repel the
 ‘ charge of monotony and mannerism. Yours, &c.’

LETTER 313.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, April 11th, 1818.*

‘ Will you send me by letter, packet, or parcel,
 ‘ half a dozen of the coloured prints from Holmes’s
 ‘ miniature (the latter done shortly before I left
 ‘ your country, and the prints about a year ago) ; I
 ‘ shall be obliged to you, as some people here have
 ‘ asked me for the like. It is a picture of my upright
 ‘ self done for Scrope B. Davies, esq. *

‘ Why have you not sent me an answer, and list of
 ‘ subscribers to the translation of the Armenian *Euse-*
 ‘ *bios* ? of which I sent you printed copies of the pro-
 ‘ spectus (in French) two moons ago. Have you had

* There follows, in this place, among other matter, a long string of verses, in various metres, to the amount of about sixty lines, so full of light gaiety and humour, that it is with some reluctance I suppress them. They might, however, have the effect of giving pain in quarters where even the author himself would not have deliberately inflicted it ;—from a pen like his, touches may be wounds, and without being actually intended as such.

‘ the letter?—I shall send you another:—you must not
 ‘ neglect my Armenians. Tooth-powder, magnesia,
 ‘ tincture of myrrh, tooth-brushes, diachylon plaster,
 ‘ Peruvian bark, are my personal demands.

‘ Strahan, Tonson, Lintot of the times,
 ‘ Patron and publisher of rhymes,
 ‘ For thee the bard up Pindus climbs,
 My Murray.

‘ To thee, with hope and terror dumb,
 ‘ The unfledged MS. authors come;
 ‘ Thou printest all—and sellest some—
 ‘ My Murray.

‘ Upon thy table’s baize so green
 ‘ The last new Quarterly is seen,
 ‘ But where is thy new Magazine,
 ‘ My Murray?

‘ Along thy sprucest bookshelves shine
 ‘ The works thou deemest most divine—
 ‘ The “ Art of Cookery,” and mine,
 ‘ My Murray.

‘ Tours, Travels, Essays, too, I wist,
 ‘ And Sermons to thy mill bring grist!
 ‘ And then thou hast the “ Navy List,”
 ‘ My Murray.

‘ And Heaven forbid I should conclude
 ‘ Without “ the Board of Longitude,”
 ‘ Although this narrow paper would,
 ‘ My Murray!’

LETTER 314.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, April 12th, 1818.*

‘ This letter will be delivered by Signor Gioe.
 ‘ Bata. Missiaglia, proprietor of the Apollo library,
 ‘ and the principal publisher and bookseller now in
 ‘ Venice. He sets out for London with a view to
 ‘ business and correspondence with the English book-

‘ sellers: and it is in the hope that it may be for your
‘ mutual advantage that I furnish him with this letter
‘ of introduction to you. If you can be of use to him,
‘ either by recommendation to others, or by any per-
‘ sonal attention on your own part, you will oblige
‘ him and gratify me. You may also perhaps both be
‘ able to derive advantage, or establish some mode of
‘ literary communication, pleasing to the public, and
‘ beneficial to one another.

‘ At any rate, be civil to him for my sake, as well as
‘ for the honour and glory of publishers and authors
‘ now and to come for evermore.

‘ With him I also consign a great number of MS.
‘ letters written in English, French, and Italian, by
‘ various English established in Italy during the last
‘ century:—the names of the writers, Lord Hervey,
‘ Lady M. W. Montague (hers are but few—some
‘ billets-doux in French to Algarotti, and one letter in
‘ English, Italian, and all sorts of jargon, to the same),
‘ Gray, the poet (one letter), Mason (two or three),
‘ Garrick, Lord Chatham, David Hume, and many of
‘ lesser note,—all addressed to Count Algarotti. Out
‘ of these, I think, with discretion, an amusing miscel-
‘ laneous volume of letters might be extracted, provided
‘ some good editor were disposed to undertake the
‘ selection, and preface, and a few notes, &c.

‘ The proprietor of these is a friend of mine, *Dr.*
‘ *Aglietti*,—a great name in Italy,—and if you are
‘ disposed to publish, it will be for *his benefit*, and it is
‘ to and for him that you will name a price, if you
‘ take upon you the work. *I* would *edite* it myself,
‘ but am too far off, and too lazy to undertake it; but
‘ I wish that it could be done. The letters of Lord

‘ Hervey, in Mr. Rose’s * opinion and mine, are good ;
 ‘ and the *short* French love letters *certainly* are Lady
 ‘ M. W. Montague’s—the *French* not good, but the sen-
 ‘ timents beautiful. Gray’s letter good ; and Mason’s
 ‘ tolerable. The whole correspondence must be *well*
 ‘ *weeded* ; but this being done, a small and pretty
 ‘ popular volume might be made of it.—There are
 ‘ many ministers’ letters—Gray, the ambassador at
 ‘ Naples, Horace Mann, and others of the same kind
 ‘ of animal.

‘ I thought of a preface, defending Lord Hervey
 ‘ against Pope’s attack, but Pope—*quoad* Pope, the
 ‘ poet—against all the world, in the unjustifiable
 ‘ attempts begun by Warton, and carried on at this
 ‘ day by the new school of critics and scribblers, who
 ‘ think themselves poets because they do *not* write like
 ‘ Pope. I have no patience with such cursed humbug
 ‘ and bad taste ; your whole generation are not worth
 ‘ a Canto of the Rape of the Lock, or the Essay on
 ‘ Man, or the Dunciad, or “anything that is his.”—
 ‘ But it is three in the matin, and I must go to bed.

‘ Yours always, &c.’

* Among Lord Byron’s papers, I find some verses addressed to him, about this time, by Mr. W. Rose, with the following note annexed to them :—‘ These verses were sent to me by W. S. Rose, from Abaro, in the spring of 1818. They are good and true ; and Rose is a fine fellow, and one of the few English who understand *Italy*, without which Italian is nothing.’ The verses begin thus :

‘ Byron†, while you make gay what circle fits ye,
 ‘ Bandy Venetian slang with the Benzòn,
 ‘ Or play at company with the Albrizzi,
 ‘ The self-pleased pedant, and patrician crone,
 ‘ Grimanis, Mocenigos, Balbis, Rizzi,
 ‘ Compassionate our cruel case,—alone,
 ‘ Our pleasure an academy of frogs,
 ‘ Who nightly serenade us from the bogs,’ &c. &c.

† ‘ I have *hunted* out a precedent for this unceremonious address.’

LETTER 315.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, April 17th, 1818.*

‘ A few days ago, I wrote to you a letter, requesting
‘ you to desire Hanson to desire his messenger to come
‘ on from Geneva to Venice, because I won’t go from
‘ Venice to Geneva; and if this is not done, the mes-
‘ senger may be damned, with him who mis-sent him.
‘ Pray reiterate my request.

‘ With the proofs returned, I sent two additional
‘ stanzas for Canto Fourth: did they arrive?

‘ Your Monthly reviewer has made a mistake: *Cava-*
‘ *liere*, alone, is well enough; but ‘ *Cavalier*’ *servente*’
‘ has always the *e* mute in conversation, and omitted in
‘ writing; so that it is not for the sake of metre; and
‘ pray let Griffiths know this, with my compliments.
‘ I humbly conjecture that I know as much of Italian
‘ society and language as any of his people; but, to
‘ make assurance doubly sure, I asked, at the Countess
‘ Benzona’s last night, the question of more than one
‘ person in *the office*, and of these “cavalieri serventi”
‘ (in the plural, recollect) I found that they all accorded
‘ in pronouncing for “cavalier’ servente” in the *sin-*
‘ *gular* number. I wish Mr. * * * * (or whoever Grif-
‘ fiths’ scribbler may be) would not talk of what he
‘ don’t understand. Such fellows are not fit to be in-
‘ trusted with Italian, even in a quotation.

‘ Did you receive two additional stanzas, to be in-
‘ serted towards the close of Canto Fourth? Respond,
‘ that (if not) they may be sent.

‘ Tell Mr. * * and Mr. Hanson that they may as
‘ well expect Geneva to come to me, as that I should
‘ go to Geneva. The messenger may go on or return,
‘ as he pleases; I won’t stir: and I look upon it as a

‘ piece of singular absurdity in those who know me
‘ imagining that I should ;—not to say *malice*, in
‘ attempting unnecessary torture. If, on the occasion,
‘ my interests should suffer, it is *their* neglect that is
‘ to blame ; and they may all be d——d together.

‘ It is ten o’clock and time to dress.

‘ Yours, &c.’

LETTER 316.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ April 23d, 1818.

‘ The time is past in which I could feel for the dead,
‘ —or I should feel for the death of Lady Melbourne,
‘ the best, and kindest, and ablest female I ever knew,
‘ old or young. But “ I have supped full of horrors,”
‘ and events of this kind have only a kind of numbness
‘ worse than pain,—like a violent blow on the elbow
‘ or the head. There is one link less between England
‘ and myself.

‘ Now to business. I presented you with Beppo,
‘ as part of the contract for Canto Fourth,—consider-
‘ ing the price you are to pay for the same, and intend-
‘ ing to eke you out in case of public caprice or my
‘ own poetical failure. If you choose to suppress it
‘ entirely, at Mr. * * * *’s suggestion, you may do as
‘ you please. But recollect it is not to be published
‘ in a *garbled* or *mutilated* state. I reserve to my
‘ friends and myself the right of correcting the press ;
‘ —if the publication continue, it is to continue in its
‘ present form.

‘ As Mr. * * says that he did not write this letter
‘ &c., I am ready to believe him ; but for the firmness
‘ of my former persuasion, I refer to Mr. * * * *, who
‘ can inform you how sincerely I erred on this point.
‘ He has also the note—or, at least, had it, for I gave

‘ it to him with my verbal comments thereupon. As
 ‘ to “Beppo,” I will not alter or suppress a syllable
 ‘ for any man’s pleasure but my own.

‘ You may tell them this ; and add, that nothing
 ‘ but force or necessity shall stir me one step towards
 ‘ places to which they would wring me.

‘ If your literary matters prosper, let me know. If
 ‘ “Beppo” pleases, you shall have more in a year or
 ‘ two in the same mood. And so, “Good morrow to
 ‘ you, good Master Lieutenant.” ‘ Yours, &c.’

LETTER 317.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *Palazzo Mocenigo, Canal Grande,*
 ‘ *Venice, June 1st, 1818.*

‘ Your letter is almost the only news, as yet, of
 ‘ Canto 4th, and it has by no means settled its fate,—
 ‘ at least, does not tell me how the “Poeshie” has
 ‘ been received by the public. But I suspect, no
 ‘ great things,—firstly, from Murray’s “horrid still-
 ‘ ness ;” secondly, from what you say about the stanzas
 ‘ running into each other*, which I take *not* to be *yours*,
 ‘ but a notion you have been dinned with among the
 ‘ Blues. The fact is, that the terza rima of the Ita-
 ‘ lians, which always *runs* on and in, may have led me
 ‘ into experiments, and carelessness into conceit—or
 ‘ conceit into carelessness—in either of which events
 ‘ failure will be probable, and my fair woman,
 ‘ “superne,” end in a fish ; so that Childe Harold will
 ‘ be like the mermaid, my family crest, with the Fourth
 ‘ Canto for a tail thereunto. I won’t quarrel with the
 ‘ public, however, for the “Bulgars” are generally

* I had said, I think, in my letter to him, that this practice of carry-
 ing one stanza into another was ‘something like taking on horses ano-
 ther stage without baiting.’

‘ right ; and if I miss now, I may hit another time :—
‘ and so, the “ gods give us joy.”

‘ You like Beppo, that’s right. I have not had the
‘ Fudges yet, but live in hopes. I need not say that
‘ your successes are mine. By the way, Lydia White
‘ is here, and has just borrowed my copy of “ Lalla
‘ Rookh.”

‘ Hunt’s letter is probably the exact piece of vulgar
‘ coxcombry you might expect from his situation. He
‘ is a good man, with some poetical elements in his
‘ chaos ; but spoilt by the Christ-Church Hospital and
‘ a Sunday newspaper,—to say nothing of the Surry
‘ Jail, which conceited him into a martyr. But he is
‘ a good man. When I saw “ Rimini” in MS., I told
‘ him that I deemed it good poetry at bottom, disfi-
‘ gured only by a strange style. His answer was, that
‘ his style was a system, or *upon system*, or some such
‘ cant ; and, when a man talks of system, his case is
‘ hopeless : so I said no more to him, and very little
‘ to any one else.

‘ He believes his trash of vulgar phrases tortured
‘ into compound barbarisms to be *old English* ; and we
‘ may say of it as Aimwell says of Captain Gibbet’s
‘ regiment, when the Captain calls it an “ old corps,”
‘ —“ the *oldest* in Europe, if I may judge by your uni-
‘ form.” He sent out his “ Foliage” by Percy Shelley
‘ * * *, and, of all the ineffable Centaurs that were
‘ ever begotten by Self-love upon a Night-mare, I think
‘ this monstrous Sagittary the most prodigious. *He*
‘ (Leigh H.) is an honest Charlatan, who has per-
‘ suaded himself into a belief of his own impostures,
‘ and talks Punch in pure simplicity of heart, taking
‘ himself (as poor Fitzgerald said of *himself* in the
‘ Morning Post) for *Vates* in both senses, or nonsenses,

‘ of the word. Did you look at the translations of his
 ‘ own which he prefers to Pope and Cowper, and says
 ‘ so?—Did you read his skimble-skamble about * *
 ‘ being at the head of his own *profession*, in the *eyes* of
 ‘ *those* who followed it? I thought that Poetry was
 ‘ an *art*, or an *attribute*, and not a *profession*;—but be
 ‘ it one, is that * * * * * at the head of *your* profes-
 ‘ sion in *your* eyes? I’ll be curst if he is of *mine*, or
 ‘ ever shall be. He is the only one of us (but of us he
 ‘ is not) whose coronation I would oppose. Let them
 ‘ take Scott, Campbell, Crabbe, or you, or me, or any
 ‘ of the living, and throne him;—but not this new
 ‘ Jacob Behmen, this * * * * * whose pride might
 ‘ have kept him true, even had his principles turned as
 ‘ perverted as his *soi-disant* poetry.

‘ But Leigh Hunt is a good man, and a good father
 ‘ —see his Odes to all the Masters Hunt;—a good
 ‘ husband—see his Sonnet to Mrs. Hunt;—a good
 ‘ friend—see his Epistles to different people;—and a
 ‘ great coxcomb and a very vulgar person in every-
 ‘ thing about him. But that’s not his fault, but of
 ‘ circumstances*.

‘ I do not know any good model for a life of Sheridan
 ‘ but that of *Savage*. Recollect, however, that the
 ‘ life of such a man may be made far more amusing
 ‘ than if he had been a Wilberforce;—and this with-
 ‘ out offending the living, or insulting the dead. The
 ‘ Whigs abuse him; however, he never left them, and
 ‘ such blunderers deserve neither credit nor compas-
 ‘ sion. As for his creditors,—remember, Sheridan

* I had, in first transcribing the above letter for the press, omitted the whole of this caustic and, perhaps, over-severe character of Mr. Hunt; but the tone of that gentleman’s book having, as far as himself is concerned, released me from all those scruples which prompted the suppression, I have considered myself at liberty to restore the passage.

‘ *never had* a shilling, and was thrown, with great
‘ powers and passions, into the thick of the world, and
‘ placed upon the pinnacle of success, with no other
‘ external means to support him in his elevation. Did
‘ Fox * * * *pay his* debts?—or did Sheridan take a
‘ subscription? Was the * *’s drunkenness more ex-
‘ cusable than his? Were his intrigues more notorious
‘ than those of all his contemporaries? and is his
‘ memory to be blasted, and theirs respected? Don’t
‘ let yourself be led away by clamour, but compare
‘ him with the coalitioner Fox, and the pensioner
‘ Burke, as a man of principle, and with ten hundred
‘ thousand in personal views, and with none in talent,
‘ for he beat them all *out and out*. Without means,
‘ without connexion, without character (which might
‘ be false at first, and make him mad afterwards from
‘ desperation), he beat them all, in all he ever attempted.
‘ But alas poor human nature! Good night—or, rather,
‘ morning. It is four, and the dawn gleams over the
‘ Grand Canal, and unshadows the Rialto. I must to
‘ bed; up all night—but, as George Philpot says, “ it’s
‘ life, though, damme, its life!” Ever yours, ‘ B.

‘ Excuse errors—no time for revision. The post
‘ goes out at noon, and I sha’n’t be up then. I will
‘ write again soon about your *plan* for a publication.’

During the greater part of the period which this last series of letters comprises, he had continued to occupy the same lodgings in an extremely narrow street called the Spezieria, at the house of the linen-draper, to whose lady he devoted so much of his thoughts. That he was, for the time, attached to this person,—as far as a passion so transient can deserve the name of attachment,—is evident from his whole

conduct. The language of his letters shows sufficiently how much the novelty of this foreign tie had caught his fancy; and to the Venetians, among whom such arrangements are mere matters of course, the assiduity with which he attended his Signora to the theatre, and the Ridottos, was a subject of much amusement. It was with difficulty, indeed, that he could be prevailed upon to absent himself from her so long as to admit of that hasty visit to the Immortal City, out of which one of his own noblest titles to immortality sprung; and having, in the space of a few weeks, drunk in more inspiration from all he saw than, in a less excited state, possibly, he might have imbibed in years, he again hurried back, without extending his journey to Naples,—having written to the fair Marianna to meet him at some distance from Venice.

Besides some seasonable acts of liberality to the husband, who had, it seems, failed in trade, he also presented to the lady herself a handsome set of diamonds; and there is an anecdote related, in reference to this gift, which shows the exceeding easiness and forbearance of his disposition towards those who had acquired any hold on his heart. A casket, which was for sale, being one day offered to him, he was not a little surprised on discovering them to be the same jewels which he had, not long before, presented to his fair favourite, and which had, by some unromantic means, found their way back into the market. Without inquiring, however, any further into the circumstances, he generously repurchased the casket and presented it to the lady once more, good-humouredly taxing her with the very little estimation in which, as it appeared, she held his presents.

To whatever extent this unsentimental incident may

have had a share in dispelling the romance of his passion, it is certain that, before the expiration of the first twelvemonth, he began to find his lodgings in the Speziera inconvenient, and accordingly entered into treaty with Count Gritti for his Palace on the Grand Canal,—engaging to give for it, what is considered, I believe, a large rent in Venice, 200 louis a year. On finding, however, that, in the counterpart of the lease brought for his signature, a new clause had been introduced, prohibiting him not only from underletting the house, in case he should leave Venice, but from even allowing any of his own friends to occupy it during his occasional absence, he declined closing on such terms; and resenting so material a departure from the original engagement, declared in society, that he would have no objection to give the same rent, though acknowledged to be exorbitant, for any other Palace in Venice, however inferior, in all respects, to Count Gritti's. After such an announcement, he was not likely to remain long unhoused; and the Countess Mocenigo having offered him one of her three Palazzi, on the Grand Canal, he removed to this house in the summer of the present year, and continued to occupy it during the remainder of his stay in Venice.

Highly censurable, in point of morality and decorum, as was his course of life while under the roof of Madame * *, it was (with pain I am forced to confess) venial in comparison with the strange, headlong career of licence to which, when weaned from that connexion, he so unrestrainedly and, it may be added, defyingly abandoned himself. Of the state of his mind on leaving England I have already endeavoured to convey some idea, and, among the feelings that went to make up that self-centred spirit of resistance which

he then opposed to his fate, was an indignant scorn of his own countrymen for the wrongs he thought they had done him. For a time, the kindly sentiments which he still harboured towards Lady Byron, and a sort of vague hope, perhaps, that all would yet come right again, kept his mind in a mood somewhat more softened and docile, as well as sufficiently under the influence of English opinion to prevent his breaking out into such open rebellion against it, as he unluckily did afterwards.

By the failure of the attempted mediation with Lady Byron, his last link with home was severed; while, notwithstanding the quiet and unobtrusive life which he had led at Geneva, there was as yet, he found, no cessation of the slanderous warfare against his character;—the same busy and misrepresenting spirit which had tracked his every step at home having, with no less malicious watchfulness, dogged him into exile. To this persuasion, for which he had but too much grounds, was added all that an imagination like his could lend to truth,—all that he was left to interpret, in his own way, of the absent and the silent,—till, at length, arming himself against fancied enemies and wrongs, and, with the condition (as it seemed to him) of an outlaw, assuming also the desperation, he resolved, as his countrymen would not do justice to the better parts of his nature, to have, at least, the perverse satisfaction of braving and shocking them with the worst. It is to this feeling, I am convinced, far more than to any depraved taste for such a course of life, that the extravagances to which he now, for a short time, gave loose are to be attributed. The exciting effect, indeed, of this mode of existence while it lasted, both upon his spirits and his genius,—so like

what, as he himself tells us, was always produced in him by a state of contest and defiance,—showed how much of this latter feeling must have been mixed with his excesses. The altered character, too, of his letters in this respect cannot fail, I think, to be remarked by the reader,—there being, with an evident increase of intellectual vigour, a tone of violence and bravado breaking out in them continually, which marks the high pitch of reaction to which he had now wound up his temper.

In fact, so far from the powers of his intellect being at all weakened or dissipated by these irregularities, he was, perhaps, at no time of his life, so actively in the full possession of all its energies; and his friend Shelley, who went to Venice, at this period, to see him*, used to say, that all he observed of the workings of Byron's mind, during his visit, gave him a far higher idea of its powers than he had ever before entertained. It was, indeed, then that Shelley sketched out, and chiefly wrote, his poem of 'Julian and Mad-

* The following are extracts from a letter of Shelley's to a friend at this time.

' *Venice, August, 1818.*

' We came from Padua hither in a gondola; and the Gondoliere, among other things, without any hint on our part, began talking of Lord Byron. He said he was a "Giovanotto Inglese," with a "nome stravagante," who lived very luxuriously, and spent great sums of money.

' At three o'clock I called on Lord Byron. He was delighted to see me, and our first conversation of course consisted in the object of our visit. He took me in his gondola, across the Laguna, to a long, strandy sand, which defends Venice from the Adriatic. When we disembarked, we found his horses waiting for us, and we rode along the sands, talking. Our conversation consisted in histories of his own wounded feelings, and questions as to my affairs, with great professions of friendship and regard for me. He said that if he had been in England, at the time of the Chancery affair, he would have moved heaven and earth to have prevented such a decision. He talked of literary matters,—his Fourth Canto, which he says is very good, and indeed repeated some stanzas, of great energy, to me. When we returned to his palace, which is one of the most magnificent in Venice, &c. &c.'

dalo,' in the latter of which personages he has so picturesquely shadowed forth his noble friend*; and the allusions to 'the Swan of Albion,' in his 'Lines written among the Euganean Hills,' were also, I understand, the result of the same access of admiration and enthusiasm.

In speaking of the Venetian women, in one of the preceding letters, Lord Byron, it will be recollected, remarks, that the beauty for which they were once so celebrated is no longer now to be found among the 'Dame,' or higher orders, but all under the 'fazzioli,' or kerchiefs, of the lower. It was, unluckily, among these latter specimens of the 'bel sangue' of Venice that he now, by a suddenness of descent in the scale of refinement, for which nothing but the present wayward state of his mind can account, chose to select the companions of his disengaged hours;—and an additional proof that, in this short, daring career of libertinism, he was but desperately seeking relief for a wronged and mortified spirit, and

'What to us seem'd guilt might be but woe,'—

* In the preface also to this poem, under the fictitious name of Count Maddalo, the following just and striking portrait of Lord Byron is drawn:—

'He is a person of the most consummate genius, and capable, if he would direct his energies to such an end, of becoming the redeemer of his degraded country. But it is his weakness to be proud: he derives, from a comparison of his own extraordinary mind with the dwarfish intellects that surround him, an intense apprehension of the nothingness of human life. His passions and his powers are incomparably greater than those of other men, and instead of the latter having been employed in curbing the former, they have mutually lent each other strength. His ambition prays upon itself for want of objects which it can consider worthy of exertion. I say that Maddalo is proud, because I can find no other word to express the concentrated and impatient feelings which consume him; but it is on his own hopes and affections only that he seems to trample, for in social life no human being can be more gentle, patient, and unassuming than Maddalo. He is cheerful, frank, and witty. His more serious conversation is a sort of intoxication. He has travelled much; and there is an inexpressible charm in his relation of his adventures in different countries.'

is that, more than once, of an evening, when his house has been in the possession of such visitants, he has been known to hurry away in his gondola, and pass the greater part of the night upon the water, as if hating to return to his home. It is, indeed, certain, that to this least defensible portion of his whole life he always looked back, during the short remainder of it, with painful self-reproach; and among the causes of the detestation which he afterwards felt for Venice, this recollection of the excesses to which he had there abandoned himself was not the least prominent.

The most distinguished and, at last, the reigning favourite of all this unworthy Harem was a woman named Margarita Cogni, who has been already mentioned in one of these letters, and who, from the trade of her husband, was known by the title of the Fornarina. A portrait of this handsome virago, drawn by Harlowe when at Venice, having fallen into the hands of one of Lord Byron's friends after the death of that artist, the noble poet, on being applied to for some particulars of his heroine, wrote a long letter on the subject, from which the following are extracts:—

‘ Since you desire the story of Margarita Cogni, you shall be told it, though it may be lengthy.

‘ Her face is the fine Venetian cast of the old time; her figure, though perhaps too tall, is not less fine—and taken altogether in the national dress.

‘ In the summer of 1817, * * * * and myself were sauntering on horseback along the Brenta one evening, when, amongst a group of peasants, we remarked two girls as the prettiest we had seen for some time. About this period, there had been great distress in the country, and I had a little relieved some of the people. Generosity makes a great figure at very

‘ little cost in Venetian livres, and mine had probably
‘ been exaggerated as an Englishman’s. Whether
‘ they remarked us looking at them or no, I know not ;
‘ but one of them called out to me in Venetian, “ Why
‘ do not you, who relieve others, think of us also ?” I
‘ turned round and answered her—“ Cara, tu sei
‘ troppo bella e giovane per aver’ bisogna del’ soccorso
‘ mio.” She answered, “ If you saw my hut and my
‘ food, you would not say so.” All this passed half
‘ jestingly, and I saw no more of her for some days.

‘ A few evenings after, we met with these two girls
‘ again, and they addressed us more seriously, assuring
‘ us of the truth of their statement. They were cou-
‘ sins ; Margarita married, the other single. As I
‘ doubted still of the circumstances, I took the business
‘ in a different light, and made an appointment with
‘ them for the next evening. In short, in a few even-
‘ ings we arranged our affairs, and for a long space
‘ of time she was the only one who preserved over me
‘ an ascendancy which was often disputed, and never
‘ impaired.

‘ The reasons of this were, firstly, her person ;—very
‘ dark, tall, the Venetian face, very fine black eyes.
‘ She was two-and-twenty years old, * * *
‘ She was besides a thorough Venetian in her dialect,
‘ in her thoughts, in her countenance, in everything,
‘ with all their naïveté and pantaloon humour. Be-
‘ sides, she could neither read nor write, and could not
‘ plague me with letters,—except twice that she paid
‘ sixpence to a public scribe, under the piazza, to make
‘ a letter for her, upon some occasion when I was ill
‘ and could not see her. In other respects, she was
‘ somewhat fierce and “ prepotente,” that is, overbear-
‘ ing, and used to walk in whenever it suited her, with

‘ no very great regard to time, place, nor persons ; and
‘ if she found any women in her way, she knocked
‘ them down.

‘ When I first knew her, I was in “relazione”
‘ (liaison) with la Signora * *, who was silly enough
‘ one evening at Dolo, accompanied by some of her
‘ female friends, to threaten her ; for the gossips of the
‘ Villeggiatura had already found out, by the neighing
‘ of my horse one evening, that I used to “ride late in
‘ the night” to meet the Fornarina. Margarita threw
‘ back her veil (fazziolo), and replied in very explicit
‘ Venetian : “*You are not his wife : I am not his*
‘ *wife : you are his Donna, and I am his Donna : your*
‘ *husband is a becco, and mine is another. For the*
‘ *rest, what right have you to reproach me ? If he*
‘ *prefers me to you, is it my fault ? If you wish to*
‘ *secure him, tie him to your petticoat-string.—But do*
‘ *not think to speak to me without a reply, because*
‘ *you happen to be richer than I am.*” Having deli-
‘ vered this pretty piece of eloquence (which I trans-
‘ late as it was related to me by a bystander), she went
‘ on her way, leaving a numerous audience with
‘ Madame * *, to ponder at her leisure on the dialogue
‘ between them.

‘ When I came to Venice for the winter, she fol-
‘ lowed ; and as she found herself out to be a favourite,
‘ she came to me pretty often. But she had inordinate
‘ self-love, and was not tolerant of other women. At
‘ the “Cavalchina,” the masked ball on the last night
‘ of the Carnival, where all the world goes, she snatched
‘ off the mask of Madame Contarini, a lady noble by
‘ birth, and decent in conduct, for no other reason but
‘ because she happened to be leaning on my arm.

‘ You may suppose what a cursed noise this made ;
‘ but this is only one of her pranks.

‘ At last she quarrelled with her husband, and one
‘ evening ran away to my house. I told her this
‘ would not do : she said she would lie in the street,
‘ but not go back to him ; that he beat her, (the
‘ gentle tigress!) spent her money, and scandalously
‘ neglected her. As it was midnight I let her stay,
‘ and next day there was no moving her at all. Her
‘ husband came, roaring and crying, and entreating
‘ her to come back :—*not* she ! He then applied to
‘ the police, and they applied to me : I told them and
‘ her husband to *take* her ; I did not want her ; she
‘ had come, and I could not fling her out of the win-
‘ dow ; but they might conduct her through that or
‘ the door if they chose it. She went before the com-
‘ missary, but was obliged to return with that “becco
‘ ettico,” as she called the poor man, who had a
‘ phthisic. In a few days she ran away again. After
‘ a precious piece of work, she fixed herself in my
‘ house, really and truly without my consent ; but,
‘ owing to my indolence, and not being able to keep
‘ my countenance—for if I began in a rage, she always
‘ finished by making me laugh with some Venetian
‘ pantaloonery or another ; and the gipsy knew this
‘ well enough, as well as her other powers of persua-
‘ sion, and exerted them with the usual tact and suc-
‘ cess of all she-things ;—high and low, they are all
‘ alike for that.

‘ Madame Benzoni also took her under her protec-
‘ tion, and then her head turned. She was always in
‘ extremes, either crying or laughing, and so fierce
‘ when angered, that she was the terror of men, women,
‘ and children—for she had the strength of an Amazon,

‘ with the temper of Medea. She was a fine animal,
‘ but quite untameable. I was the only person that
‘ could at all keep her in any order, and when she saw
‘ me really angry (which they tell me is a savage
‘ sight), she subsided. But she had a thousand foole-
‘ ries. In her *fazziolo*, the dress of the lower orders,
‘ she looked beautiful; but, alas! she longed for a hat
‘ and feathers; and all I could say or do (and I said
‘ much) could not prevent this travestie. I put the
‘ first into the fire; but I got tired of burning them
‘ before she did of buying them, so that she made her-
‘ self a figure—for they did not at all become her.

‘ Then she would have her gowns with a *tail*—like
‘ a lady, forsooth; nothing would serve her but “*l’abita*
‘ *colla coua*,” or *cua*, (that is the Venetian for “*la cola*,”
‘ the tail or train,) and as her cursed pronunciation of
‘ the word made me laugh, there was an end of all
‘ controversy, and she dragged this diabolical tail after
‘ her everywhere.

‘ In the mean time, she beat the women and stopped
‘ my letters. I found her one day pondering over one.
‘ She used to try to find out by their shape whether
‘ they were feminine or no; and she used to lament
‘ her ignorance, and actually studied her alphabet, on
‘ purpose (as she declared) to open all letters addressed
‘ to me and read their contents.

‘ I must not omit to do justice to her housekeeping
‘ qualities. After she came into my house as “*donna*
‘ *di governo*,” the expenses were reduced to less than
‘ half, and everybody did their duty better—the apart-
‘ ments were kept in order, and everything and every-
‘ body else, except herself.

‘ That she had a sufficient regard for me in her wild
‘ way, I had many reasons to believe. I will mention

‘ one. In the autumn, one day, going to the Lido with
‘ my gondoliers, we were overtaken by a heavy squall,
‘ and the gondola put in peril—hats blown away, boat
‘ filling, oar lost, tumbling sea, thunder, rain in tor-
‘ rents, night coming, and wind unceasing. On our
‘ return, after a tight struggle, I found her on the
‘ open steps of the Mocenigo palace, on the Grand
‘ Canal, with her great black eyes flashing through
‘ her tears, and the long dark hair, which was stream-
‘ ing, drenched with rain, over her brows and breast.
‘ She was perfectly exposed to the storm; and the
‘ wind blowing her hair and dress about her thin tall
‘ figure, and the lightning flashing round her, and the
‘ waves rolling at her feet, made her look like Medea
‘ alighted from her chariot, or the Sibyl of the tempest
‘ that was rolling around her, the only living thing
‘ within hail at that moment except ourselves. On
‘ seeing me safe, she did not wait to greet me, as might
‘ have been expected, but calling out to me—“Ah!
‘ can’ della Madonna, xe esto il tempo per andar’ al’
‘ Lido?” (Ah! dog of the Virgin, is this a time to go
‘ to Lido?) ran into the house, and solaced herself
‘ with scolding the boatmen for not foreseeing the
‘ “temporale.” I am told by the servants that she had
‘ only been prevented from coming in a boat to look
‘ after me, by the refusal of all the gondoliers of the
‘ canal to put out into the harbour in such a moment;
‘ and that then she sat down on the steps in all the
‘ thickest of the squall, and would neither be removed
‘ nor comforted. Her joy at seeing me again was
‘ moderately mixed with ferocity, and gave me the
‘ idea of a tigress over her recovered cubs.

‘ But her reign drew near a close. She became
‘ quite ungovernable some months after, and a concur-

‘ rence of complaints, some true, and many false—“ a
‘ favourite has no friends”—determined me to part
‘ with her. I told her quietly that she must return
‘ home (she had acquired a sufficient provision for
‘ herself and mother, &c. in my service), and she
‘ refused to quit the house. I was firm, and she went
‘ threatening knives and revenge. I told her that I
‘ had seen knives drawn before her time, and that if
‘ she chose to begin, there was a knife, and fork also,
‘ at her service on the table, and that intimidation
‘ would not do. The next day, while I was at dinner,
‘ she walked in (having broken open a glass door that
‘ led from the hall below to the staircase, by way of
‘ prologue), and advancing straight up to the table,
‘ snatched the knife from my hand, cutting me slightly
‘ in the thumb in the operation. Whether she meant
‘ to use this against herself or me, I know not—pro-
‘ bably against neither—but Fletcher seized her by
‘ the arms, and disarmed her. I then called my
‘ boatmen, and desired them to get the gondola ready,
‘ and conduct her to her own house again, seeing care-
‘ fully that she did herself no mischief by the way.
‘ She seemed quite quiet, and walked down stairs. I
‘ resumed my dinner.

‘ We heard a great noise, and went out, and met
‘ them on the staircase, carrying her up stairs. She
‘ had thrown herself into the canal. That she intended
‘ to destroy herself, I do not believe: but when we
‘ consider the fear women and men who can’t swim
‘ have of deep or even of shallow water (and the Ve-
‘ netians in particular, though they live on the waves),
‘ and that it was also night, and dark, and very cold,
‘ it shows that she had a devilish spirit of some sort
‘ within her. They had got her out without much

‘ difficulty or damage, excepting the salt water she had
‘ swallowed, and the wetting she had undergone.

‘ I foresaw her intention to refix herself, and sent
‘ for a surgeon, inquiring how many hours it would
‘ require to restore her from her agitation; and he
‘ named the time. I then said, “I give you that
‘ time, and more if you require it; but at the expira-
‘ tion of this prescribed period, if *she* does not leave
‘ the house, *I* will.

‘ All my people were consternated. They had
‘ always been frightened at her, and were now para-
‘ lysed: they wanted me to apply to the police, to
‘ guard myself, &c. &c., like a pack of snivelling ser-
‘ vile boobies as they were. I did nothing of the kind,
‘ thinking that I might as well end that way as another,
‘ besides, I had been used to savage women, and knew
‘ their ways.

‘ I had her sent home quietly after her recovery, and
‘ never saw her since, except twice at the opera, at a
‘ distance amongst the audience. She made many
‘ attempts to return, but no more violent ones.—And
‘ this is the story of Margarita Cogni, as far as it
‘ relates to me.

‘ I forgot to mention that she was very devout, and
‘ would cross herself if she heard the prayer time
‘ strike.

‘ She was quick in reply; as, for instance—One day
‘ when she had made me very angry with beating some-
‘ body or other, I called her a *cow* (*cow*, in Italian, is a
‘ sad affront). I called her “*Vacca*.” She turned round,
‘ curtsied, and answered, “*Vacca tua, ’celenza*” (i. e.
‘ *eccellenza*). “*Your cow, please your Excellency*.”
‘ In short, she was, as I said before, a very fine ani-
‘ mal, of considerable beauty and energy, with many

‘ good and several amusing qualities, but wild as a
‘ witch and fierce as a demon. She used to boast
‘ publicly of her ascendancy over me, contrasting it
‘ with that of other women, and assigning for it sun-
‘ dry reasons. True it was, that they all tried to get
‘ her away, and no one succeeded till her own absur-
‘ dity helped them.

‘ I omitted to tell you her answer, when I reproached
‘ her for snatching Madame Contarini’s mask at the
‘ Cavalcina. I represented to her that she was a
‘ lady of high birth, “una Dama,” &c. She answered,
‘ “Se ella è dama *mi* (*io*) son Veneziana ;”—“if she is
‘ a lady, I am a Venetian.” This would have been fine
‘ a hundred years ago, the pride of the nation rising
‘ up against the pride of aristocracy : but, alas! Venice,
‘ and her people, and her nobles, are alike returning
‘ fast to the ocean ; and where there is no indepen-
‘ dence, there can be no real self-respect. I believe
‘ that I mistook or mis-stated one of her phrases in my
‘ letter ; it should have been—“ Can’ della Madonna,
‘ cosa vus’ tu ? esto non é tempo per andar’ a Lido ?” ’

It was at this time, as we shall see by the letters I am about to produce, and as the features, indeed, of the progeny itself would but too plainly indicate, that he conceived, and wrote some part of, his Poem of ‘ Don Juan ;’—and never did pages more faithfully and, in many respects, lamentably reflect every variety of feeling, and whim, and passion that, like the wrack of autumn, swept across the author’s mind in writing them. Nothing less, indeed, than that singular combination of attributes, which existed and were in full activity in his mind at this moment, could have suggested, or been capable of, the execution of such a

work. The cool shrewdness of age with the vivacity and glowing temperament of youth,—the wit of a Voltaire, with the sensibility of a Rousseau,—the minute, practical knowledge of the man of society, with the abstract and self-contemplative spirit of the poet,—a susceptibility of all that is grandest and most affecting in human virtue, with a deep, withering experience of all that is most fatal to it,—the two extremes, in short, of man's mixed and inconsistent nature, now rankly smelling of earth, now breathing of heaven,—such was the strange assemblage of contrary elements, all meeting together in the same mind, and all brought to bear, in turn, upon the same task, from which alone could have sprung this extraordinary Poem,—the most powerful and, in many respects, painful display of the versatility of genius that has ever been left for succeeding ages to wonder at and deplore.

I shall now proceed with his correspondence,—having thought some of the preceding observations necessary, not only to explain to the reader much of what he will find in these letters, but to account to him for much that has been necessarily omitted.

LETTER 318.

TO MR. MURRAY.

' Venice, June 18th, 1818.

*' Business and the utter and inexplicable silence
' of all my correspondents renders me impatient and
' troublesome. I wrote to Mr. Hanson for a balance
' which is (or ought to be) in his hands;—no answer.
' I expected the messenger with the Newstead papers
' two months ago, and instead of him, I received a
' requisition to proceed to Geneva, which (from * *,
' who knows my wishes and opinions about approach-
' ing England) could only be irony or insult.*

‘ I must, therefore, trouble *you* to pay into my
‘ bankers’ *immediately* whatever sum or sums you can
‘ make it convenient to do on our agreement; other-
‘ wise, I shall be put to the *severest* and most imme-
‘ diate inconvenience; and this at a time when, by
‘ every rational prospect and calculation, I ought to be
‘ in the receipt of considerable sums. Pray do not
‘ neglect this; you have no idea to what inconvenience
‘ you will otherwise put me. * * had some absurd
‘ notion about the disposal of this money in annuity (or
‘ God knows what), which I merely listened to when he
‘ was here to avoid squabbles and sermons; but I have
‘ occasion for the principal, and had never any serious
‘ idea of appropriating it otherwise than to answer my
‘ personal expenses. Hobhouse’s wish is, if possible,
‘ to force me back to England *: he will not succeed;
‘ and if he did, I would not stay. I hate the country,
‘ and like this; and all foolish opposition, of course,
‘ merely adds to the feeling. *Your* silence makes me
‘ doubt the success of Canto Fourth. If it has failed,
‘ I will make such deduction as you think proper and
‘ fair from the original agreement; but I could wish
‘ whatever is to be paid were remitted to me, without
‘ delay, through the usual channel, by course of post.

‘ When I tell you that I have not heard a word from
‘ England since very early in May, I have made the
‘ eulogium of my friends, or the persons who call
‘ themselves so, since I have written so often and in
‘ the greatest anxiety. Thank God, the longer I am
‘ absent, the less cause I see for regretting the country
‘ or its living contents. ‘ I am yours, &c.’

* Deeply is it, for many reasons, to be regretted that this friendly purpose did not succeed.

LETTER 319.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ Venice, July 10th, 1818.

‘ I have received your letter and the credit from
‘ Morlands, &c. for whom I have also drawn upon you
‘ at sixty days’ sight for the remainder, according to
‘ your proposition.

‘ I am still waiting in Venice, in expectancy of the
‘ arrival of Hanson’s clerk. What can detain him, I
‘ do not know ; but I trust that Mr. Hobhouse, and
‘ Mr.*Kinnaird, when their political fit is abated, will
‘ take the trouble to inquire and expedite him, as I
‘ have nearly a hundred thousand pounds depending
‘ upon the completion of the sale and the signature of
‘ the papers.

‘ The draft on you is drawn up by Siri and Will-
‘ halm. I hope that the form is correct. I signed it
‘ two or three days ago, desiring them to forward it to
‘ Messrs. Morland and Ransom.

‘ Your projected editions for November had better
‘ be postponed, as I have some things in project, or
‘ preparation, that may be of use to you, though not
‘ very important in themselves. I have completed an
‘ Ode on Venice, and have two Stories, one serious and
‘ one ludicrous (*à la Beppo*), not yet finished, and in
‘ no hurry to be so.

‘ You talk of the letter to Hobhouse being much
‘ admired, and speak of prose. I think of writing
‘ (for your full edition) some Memoirs of my life, to
‘ prefix to them, upon the same model (though far
‘ enough, I fear, from reaching it) of Gifford, Hume,
‘ &c. ; and this without any intention of making disclo-
‘ sures, or remarks upon living people, which would
‘ be unpleasant to them : but I think it might be done,
‘ and well done. However, this is to be considered.

‘ I have *materials* in plenty, but the greater part of
‘ them could not be used by *me*, nor for these hun-
‘ dred years to come. However, there is enough
‘ without these, and merely as a literary man, to make
‘ a preface for such an edition as you meditate. But
‘ this is by the way: I have not made up my mind.

‘ I enclose you a *note* on the subject of “*Parisina*,”
‘ which Hobhouse can dress for you. It is an extract
‘ of particulars from a history of Ferrara.

‘ I trust you have been attentive to Missiaglia, for
‘ the English have the character of neglecting the Ita-
‘ lians, at present, which I hope you will redeem.

‘ Yours in haste,

‘ B.’

LETTER 320.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, July 17th, 1818.*

‘ I suppose that Aglietti will take whatever you
‘ offer, but till his return from Vienna I can make him
‘ no proposal; nor, indeed, have you authorised me to do
‘ so. The three French notes *are* by Lady Mary; also
‘ another half-English-French-Italian. They are very
‘ pretty and passionate; it is a pity that a piece of one
‘ of them is lost. Algarotti seems to have treated her
‘ ill; but she was much his senior, and all women are
‘ used ill—or say so, whether they are or not.

‘ I shall be glad of your books and powders. I am
‘ still in waiting for Hanson’s clerk, but luckily not at
‘ Geneva. All my good friends wrote to me to hasten
‘ *there* to meet him, but not one had the good sense or the
‘ good nature, to write afterwards to tell me that it would
‘ be time and a journey thrown away, as he could not
‘ set off for some months after the period appointed. If
‘ I *had* taken the journey on the general suggestion,

‘ I never would have spoken again to one of you as
‘ long as I existed. I have written to request Mr. Kin-
‘ naird, when the foam of his politics is wiped away,
‘ to extract a positive answer from that * * *, and not
‘ to keep me in a state of suspense upon the subject.
‘ I hope that Kinnaird, who has my power of attorney,
‘ keeps a look-out upon the gentleman, which is the
‘ more necessary, as I have a great dislike to the idea
‘ of coming over to look after him myself.

‘ I have several things begun, verse and prose, but
‘ none in much forwardness. I have written some six
‘ or seven sheets of a Life, which I mean to continue,
‘ and send you when finished. It may perhaps serve
‘ for your projected editions. If you would tell me
‘ exactly (for I know nothing, and have no correspon-
‘ dents, except on business) the state of the reception
‘ of our late publications, and the feeling upon them,
‘ without consulting any delicacies (I am too seasoned
‘ to require them), I should know how and in what
‘ manner to proceed. I should not like to give them
‘ too much, which may probably have been the case
‘ already ; but, as I tell you, I know nothing.

‘ I once wrote from the fulness of my mind and the
‘ love of fame (not as an *end*, but as a *means*, to obtain
‘ that influence over men’s minds which is power in
‘ itself and in its consequences), and now from habit
‘ and from avarice ; so that the effect may probably be
‘ as different as the inspiration. I have the same faci-
‘ lity, and indeed necessity, of composition, to avoid
‘ idleness (though idleness in a hot country is a plea-
‘ sure), but a much greater indifference to what is to
‘ become of it, after it has served my immediate pur-
‘ pose. However, I should on no account like to——
‘ but I won’t go on, like the Archbishop of Granada,

‘ as I am very sure that you dread the fate of Gil
‘ Blas, and with good reason. ‘ Yours, &c.

‘ P.S. I have written some very savage letters to
‘ Mr. Hobhouse, Kinnaird, to you, and to Hanson,
‘ because the silence of so long a time made me tear
‘ off my remaining rags of patience. I have seen one
‘ or two late English publications which are no great
‘ things, except Rob Roy. I shall be glad of Whis-
‘ tlecraft.’

LETTER 321.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, August 26th, 1818.*

‘ You may go on with your edition, without calcu-
‘ lating on the Memoir, which I shall not publish at
‘ present. It is nearly finished, but will be too long ;
‘ and there are so many things, which, out of regard
‘ to the living, cannot be mentioned, that I have written
‘ with too much detail of that which interested me
‘ least ; so that my autobiographical Essay would
‘ resemble the tragedy of Hamlet at the country thea-
‘ tre, recited “with the part of Hamlet left out by
‘ particular desire.” I shall keep it among my papers ;
‘ it will be a kind of guide-post in case of death,
‘ and prevent some of the lies which would otherwise
‘ be told, and destroy some which have been told
‘ already.

‘ The tales also are in an unfinished state, and I can
‘ fix no time for their completion : they are also *not* in
‘ the best manner. You must not, therefore, calculate
‘ upon anything in time for this edition. The Memoir
‘ is already above forty-four sheets of very large, long
‘ paper, and will be about fifty or sixty ; but I wish to
‘ go on leisurely ; and when finished, although it might
‘ do a good deal for you at the time, I am not sure that

‘ it would serve any good purpose in the end either, as
‘ it is full of many passions and prejudices, of which it
‘ has been impossible for me to keep clear :—I have
‘ not the patience.

‘ Enclosed is a list of books which Dr. Aglietti would
‘ be glad to receive by way of price for his MS. letters,
‘ if you are disposed to purchase at the rate of fifty
‘ pounds sterling. These he will be glad to have as
‘ part, and the rest *I* will give him in money, and you
‘ may carry it to the account of books, &c., which is in
‘ balance against me, deducting it accordingly. So
‘ that the letters are yours, if you like them, at this
‘ rate ; and he and I are going to hunt for more Lady
‘ Montague letters, which he thinks of finding. I write
‘ in haste. Thanks for the article, and believe me,
‘ Yours, &c.’

To the charge brought against Lord Byron by some English travellers of being, in general, repulsive and inhospitable to his own countrymen, I have already made allusion ; and shall now add to the testimony then cited in disproof of such a charge some particulars, communicated to me by Captain Basil Hall, which exhibit the courtesy and kindness of the noble poet’s disposition in their true, natural light.

‘ On the last day of August, 1818, (says this distinguished writer and traveller,) I was taken ill with an
‘ ague at Venice, and having heard enough of the low
‘ state of the medical art in that country, I was not a
‘ little anxious as to the advice I should take. I was
‘ not acquainted with any person in Venice to whom I
‘ could refer, and had only one letter of introduction,
‘ which was to Lord Byron ; but as there were many
‘ stories floating about of his lordship’s unwillingness

‘ to be pestered with tourists, I had felt unwilling,
‘ before this moment, to intrude myself in that shape.
‘ Now, however, that I was seriously unwell, I felt
‘ sure that this offensive character would merge in that
‘ of a countryman in distress, and I sent the letter by
‘ one of my travelling companions to Lord Byron’s
‘ lodgings with a note, excusing the liberty I was
‘ taking, explaining that I was in want of medical
‘ assistance, and saying I should not send to any one
‘ till I heard the name of the person who, in his
‘ lordship’s opinion, was the best practitioner in
‘ Venice.

‘ Unfortunately for me, Lord Byron was still in bed,
‘ though it was near noon, and still more unfortunately,
‘ the bearer of my message scrupled to awake him,
‘ without first coming back to consult me. By this
‘ time I was in all the agonies of a cold ague fit, and,
‘ therefore, not at all in a condition to be consulted
‘ upon anything—so I replied pettishly, “ Oh, by no
‘ means disturb Lord Byron on my account—ring for
‘ the landlord, and send for any one he recommends.’
‘ This absurd injunction being forthwith and literally
‘ attended to, in the course of an hour I was under
‘ the discipline of mine host’s friend, whose skill and
‘ success it is no part of my present purpose to descant
‘ upon :—it is sufficient to mention that I was irrevocably
‘ in his hands long before the following most
‘ kind note was brought to me, in great haste, by Lord
‘ Byron’s servant.

‘ “ *Venice, August 31st, 1818.*

‘ “ Dear Sir,

‘ “ Dr. Aglietti is the best physician, not only in
‘ Venice, but in Italy: his residence is on the Grand
‘ Canal, and easily found; I forget the number, but

‘ am probably the only person in Venice who don’t
‘ know it. There is no comparison between him and
‘ any of the other medical people here. I regret
‘ very much to hear of your indisposition, and shall
‘ do myself the honour of waiting upon you the mo-
‘ ment I am up. I write this in bed, and have only
‘ just received the letter and note. I beg you to
‘ believe that nothing but the extreme lateness of
‘ my hours could have prevented me from replying
‘ immediately, or coming in person. I have not
‘ been called a minute.—I have the honour to be,
‘ very truly,

‘ “ Your most obedient servant,

‘ “ BYRON.”

‘ His lordship soon followed this note, and I heard
‘ his voice in the next room; but although he waited
‘ more than an hour, I could not see him, being under
‘ the inexorable hands of the doctor. In the course of
‘ the same evening he again called, but I was asleep.
‘ When I awoke I found his lordship’s valet sitting by
‘ my bedside. “He had his master’s orders,” he said,
‘ “to remain with me while I was unwell, and was
‘ instructed to say, that whatever his lordship had,
‘ or could procure, was at my service, and that he
‘ would come to me and sit with me, or do whatever I
‘ liked, if I would only let him know in what way he
‘ could be useful.”

‘ Accordingly, on the next day, I sent for some book,
‘ which was brought, with a list of his library. I for-
‘ get what it was which prevented my seeing Lord
‘ Byron on this day, though he called more than once;
‘ and on the next, I was too ill with fever to talk to
‘ any one.

‘ The moment I could go out, I took a gondola and
‘ went to pay my respects, and to thank his lordship
‘ for his attentions. It was then nearly three o’clock,
‘ but he was not yet up ; and when I went again on
‘ the following day at five, I had the mortification to
‘ learn that he had gone, at the same hour, to call
‘ upon me, so that we had crossed each other on the
‘ canal ; and, to my deep and lasting regret, I was
‘ obliged to leave Venice without seeing him.’

LETTER 322.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ *Venice, September 19th, 1818.*

‘ An English newspaper here would be a prodigy,
‘ and an opposition one a monster ; and except some
‘ extracts *from* extracts in the vile, garbled Paris
‘ gazettes, nothing of the kind reaches the Veneto-
‘ Lombard public, who are perhaps the most oppressed
‘ in Europe. My correspondencies with England are
‘ mostly on business, and chiefly with my * * *, who
‘ has no very exalted notion, or extensive conception,
‘ of an author’s attributes ; for he once took up an
‘ Edinburgh Review, and, looking at it a minute, said
‘ to me, “ So, I see you have got into the magazine,”—
‘ which is the only sentence I ever heard him utter
‘ upon literary matters, or the men thereof.

‘ My first news of your Irish Apotheosis has, conse-
‘ quently, been from yourself. But, as it will not be
‘ forgotten in a hurry, either by your friends or your
‘ enemies, I hope to have it more in detail from some
‘ of the former, and, in the meantime, I wish you joy
‘ with all my heart. Such a moment must have been
‘ a good deal better than Westminster-abbey,—be-
‘ sides being an assurance of *that* one day (many years
‘ hence, I trust,) into the bargain.

‘ I am sorry to perceive, however, by the close of
‘ your letter, that even *you* have not escaped the
‘ “surgit amari,” &c., and that your damned deputy
‘ has been gathering such “dew from the still *vex*
‘ Bermoothes”—or rather *vexatious*. Pray, give me
‘ some items of the affair, as you say it is a serious
‘ one; and, if it grows more so, you should make a
‘ trip over here for a few months, to see how things
‘ turn out. I suppose you are a violent admirer of
‘ England by your staying so long in it. For my own
‘ part, I have passed, between the age of one-and-
‘ twenty and thirty, half the intervenient years out of
‘ it without regretting anything, except that I ever
‘ returned to it at all, and the gloomy prospect before
‘ me of business and parentage obliging me, one day,
‘ to return to it again,—at least, for the transaction of
‘ affairs, the signing of papers, and inspecting of
‘ children.

‘ I have here my natural daughter, by name Allegra,
‘ —a pretty little girl enough, and reckoned like papa*.
‘ Her mamma is English,—but it is a long story, and
‘ —there’s an end. She is about twenty months old.

* This little child had been sent to him by its mother about four or five months before, under the care of a Swiss nurse, a young girl not above nineteen or twenty years of age, and in every respect unfit to have the charge of such an infant, without the superintendence of some more experienced person. ‘ The child, accordingly,’ says my informant, ‘ was but ill taken care of;—not that any blame could attach to Lord Byron, for he always expressed himself most anxious for her welfare, but because the nurse wanted the necessary experience. The poor girl was equally to be pitied; for, as Lord Byron’s household consisted of English and Italian men servants, with whom she could hold no converse, and as there was no other female to consult with and assist her in her charge, nothing could be more forlorn than her situation proved to be.’

Soon after the date of the above letter, Mrs. Hoppner, the lady of the Consul General, who had, from the first, in compassion both to father and child, invited the little Allegra occasionally to her house, very kindly proposed to Lord Byron to take charge of her altogether, and an arrangement was according concluded upon for that purpose.

‘ I have finished the First Canto (a long one, of
 ‘ about 180 octaves) of a poem in the style and man-
 ‘ ner of “Beppo,” encouraged by the good success of
 ‘ the same. It is called “Don Juan,” and is meant to
 ‘ be a little quietly facetious upon everything. But I
 ‘ doubt whether it is not—at least, as far as it has yet
 ‘ gone—too free for these very modest days. How-
 ‘ ever, I shall try the experiment, anonymously, and if
 ‘ it don’t take, it will be discontinued. It is dedicated
 ‘ to S * * in good, simple, savage verse, upon the * * * *’s
 ‘ politics, and the way he got them. But the bore of
 ‘ copying it out is intolerable ; and if I had an amanu-
 ‘ ensis he would be of no use, as my writing is so
 ‘ difficult to decipher.

‘ My poem’s Epic, and is meant to be
 ‘ Divided in twelve books, each book containing
 ‘ With love and war, a heavy gale at sea—
 ‘ A list of ships, and captains, and kings reigning—
 ‘ New characters, &c. &c.

‘ The above are two stanzas, which I send you as a
 ‘ brick of my Babel, and by which you can judge of
 ‘ the texture of the structure.

‘ In writing the Life of Sheridan, never mind the
 ‘ angry lies of the humbug Whigs. Recollect that he
 ‘ was an Irishman and a clever fellow, and that *we* have
 ‘ had some very pleasant days with him. Don’t forget
 ‘ that he was at school at Harrow, where, in my time,
 ‘ we used to show his name—R. B. Sheridan, 1765—
 ‘ as an honour to the walls. Remember * * *
 ‘ Depend upon it that there were worse folks going, of
 ‘ that gang, than ever Sheridan was.

‘ What did Parr mean by “haughtiness and cold-
 ‘ ness?” I listened to him with admiring ignorance,
 ‘ and respectful silence. What more could a talker

‘ for fame have?—they don’t like to be answered. It
 ‘ was at Payne Knight’s I met him, where he gave me
 ‘ more Greek than I could carry away. But I cer-
 ‘ tainly meant to (and *did*) treat him with the most
 ‘ respectful deference.

‘ I wish you a good night, with a Venetian bene-
 ‘ diction, “Benedetto te, e la terra che ti fara!”—
 ‘ “May you be blessed, and the *earth* which you will
 ‘ *make*”—is it not pretty? You would think it still
 ‘ prettier if you had heard it, as I did two hours ago,
 ‘ from the lips of a Venetian girl, with large black eyes,
 ‘ a face like Faustina’s, and the figure of a Juno—tall
 ‘ and energetic as a Pythoness, with eyes flashing, and
 ‘ her dark hair streaming in the moonlight—one of
 ‘ those women who may be made anything. I am
 ‘ sure if I put a poniard into the hand of this one, she
 ‘ would plunge it where I told her,—and into *me*, if I
 ‘ offended her. I like this kind of animal, and am
 ‘ sure that I should have preferred Medea to any
 ‘ woman that ever breathed. You may, perhaps, won-
 ‘ der that I don’t in that case. I could have forgiven
 ‘ the dagger or the bowl, anything, but the deliberate
 ‘ desolation piled upon me, when I stood alone upon
 ‘ my hearth, with my household gods shivered around
 ‘ me †. * * Do you suppose I have forgot-
 ‘ ten or forgiven it? It has comparatively swallowed
 ‘ up in me every other feeling, and I am only a spec-
 ‘ tator upon earth, till a tenfold opportunity offers. It
 ‘ may come yet. There are others more to be blamed
 ‘ than * * * *, and it is on these that my eyes are fixed
 ‘ unceasingly.’

† ‘ I had one only fount of quiet left,
 ‘ And *that* they poison’d! *My pure household gods*
 ‘ *Were shiver’d on my hearth.* MARINO FALIERO.

LETTER 323.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, September 24th, 1818.*

‘ In the one hundredth and thirty-second stanza
 ‘ of Canto 4th, the stanza runs in the manuscript

‘ And thou, who never yet of human wrong

‘ *Left* the unbalanced scale, great Nemesis!

‘ and *not* “*lost*,” which is nonsense, as what losing a
 ‘ scale means, I know not; but *leaving* an unbalanced
 ‘ scale, or a scale unbalanced, is intelligible*. Correct
 ‘ this, I pray,—not for the public, or the poetry, but I
 ‘ do not choose to have blunders made in addressing
 ‘ any of the deities so seriously as this is addressed.

‘ Yours, &c.

‘ P.S. In the translation from the Spanish, alter

‘ In increasing squadrons flew,

‘ to—

‘ To a mighty squadron grew.

‘ What does “thy waters *wasted* them” mean (in the
 ‘ Canto)? *That is not me*†. Consult the MS. *always*.

‘ I have written the first Canto (180 octave stanzas)
 ‘ of a poem in the style of Beppo, and have Mazeppa
 ‘ to finish besides.

‘ In referring to the mistake in stanza 132, I take
 ‘ the opportunity to desire that in future, in all parts
 ‘ of my writings referring to religion, you will be more
 ‘ careful, and not forget that it is possible that in ad-
 ‘ dressing the Deity a blunder may become a blas-
 ‘ phemy; and I do not choose to suffer such infamous
 ‘ perversions of my words or of my intentions.

‘ I saw the Canto by accident.’

* This correction, I observe, has never been made,—the passage still remaining, unmeaningly,

‘ *Lost* the unbalanced scale.’

† This passage also remains uncorrected.

LETTER 324.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, January 20th, 1819.*

‘ The opinions which I have asked of Mr. H. and
‘ others were with regard to the poetical merit, and
‘ not as to what they may think due to the *cant* of the
‘ day, which still reads the Bath Guide, Little’s Poems,
‘ Prior, and Chaucer, to say nothing of Fielding and
‘ Smollet. If published, publish entire, with the
‘ above-mentioned exceptions; or you may publish
‘ anonymously, or *not at all*. In the latter event, print
‘ 50 on my account, for private distribution.

‘ Yours, &c.

‘ I have written to Messrs. K. and H. to desire that
‘ they will not erase more than I have stated.

‘ The Second Canto of Don Juan is finished in 206
‘ stanzas.

LETTER 325.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, January 25th, 1819.*

‘ You will do me the favour to print privately (for
‘ private distribution) fifty copies of “Don Juan.” The
‘ list of the men to whom I wish it to be presented, I
‘ will send hereafter. The other two poems had best
‘ be added to the collective edition: I do not approve
‘ of *their* being published separately. *Print* Don Juan
‘ *entire*, omitting, of course, the lines on Castlereagh,
‘ as I am not on the spot to meet him. I have a
‘ Second Canto ready, which will be sent by-and-
‘ by. By this post, I have written to Mr. Hob-
‘ house, addressed to your care.

‘ Yours, &c.

‘ P.S. I have acquiesced in the request and repre-
‘ sentation; and having done so, it is idle to detail my

‘ arguments in favour of my own self-love and “Poe-
‘ shie;” but I *protest*. If the poem has poetry, it would
‘ stand; if not, fall; the rest is “leather and prunello,”
‘ and has never yet affected any human production
‘ “pro or con.” Dulness is the only annihilator in
‘ such cases. As to the cant of the day, I despise it,
‘ as I have ever done all its other finical fashions,
‘ which become you as paint became the ancient Bri-
‘ tons. If you admit this prudery, you must omit
‘ half Ariosto, La Fontaine, Shakspeare, Beaumont,
‘ Fletcher, Massinger, Ford, all the Charles Second
‘ writers; in short, *something* of most who have written
‘ before Pope and are worth reading, and much of
‘ Pope himself. *Read him*—most of you *don’t*—but *do*
‘ —and I will forgive you; though the inevitable
‘ consequence would be that you would burn all I have
‘ ever written, and all your other wretched Claudians
‘ of the day (except Scott and Crabbe) into the bar-
‘ gain. I wrong Claudian, who *was* a poet, by naming
‘ him with such fellows; but he was the “ultimus
‘ Romanorum,” the tail of the comet, and these per-
‘ sons are the tail of an old gown cut into a waistcoat
‘ for Jackey; but being both *tails*, I have compared
‘ the one with the other, though very unlike, like all
‘ similes. I write in a passion and a sirocco, and I
‘ was up till six this morning at the Carnival: but I
‘ *protest*, as I did in my former letter.’

LETTER 326.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, February 1st, 1819.*

‘ After one of the concluding stanzas of the First
‘ Canto of “Don Juan,” which ends with (I forget the
‘ number)—

‘ To have
 ‘ when the original is dust,
 ‘ A book, a d—d bad picture, and worse bust,

insert the following stanza :—

‘ What are the hopes of man, &c.

‘ I have written to you several letters, some with ad-
 ‘ ditions, and some upon the subject of the poem itself,
 ‘ which my cursed puritanical committee have pro-
 ‘ tested against publishing. But we will circumvent
 ‘ them on that point. I have not yet begun to copy
 ‘ out the Second Canto, which is finished, from natural
 ‘ laziness, and the discouragement of the milk and
 ‘ water they have thrown upon the First. I say all
 ‘ this to them as to you, that is, for *you* to say to *them*,
 ‘ for I will have nothing underhand. If they had told
 ‘ me the poetry was bad, I would have acquiesced;
 ‘ but they say the contrary, and then talk to me about
 ‘ morality—the first time I ever heard the word from
 ‘ anybody who was not a rascal that used it for a pur-
 ‘ pose. I maintain that it is the most moral of poems;
 ‘ but if people won’t discover the moral, that is their
 ‘ fault, not mine. I have already written to beg that
 ‘ in any case you will print *fifty* for private distribu-
 ‘ tion. I will send you the list of persons to whom it
 ‘ is to be sent afterwards.

‘ Within this last fortnight I have been rather indis-
 ‘ posed with a rebellion of stomach, which would re-
 ‘ tain nothing (liver, I suppose), and an inability, or
 ‘ phantasy, not to be able to eat of anything with
 ‘ relish but a kind of Adriatic fish called “scampi,”
 ‘ which happens to be the most indigestible of marine
 ‘ viands. However, within these last two days, I am
 ‘ better, and very truly yours.’

LETTER 327.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, April 6th, 1819.*

‘ The Second Canto of Don Juan was sent, on Saturday last, by post, in four packets, two of four, and two of three sheets each, containing in all two hundred and seventeen stanzas, octave measure. But I will permit no curtailments, except those mentioned about Castlereagh and * * * *. You sha’n’t make *canticles* of my cantos. The poem will please, if it is lively; if it is stupid, it will fail: but I will have none of your damned cutting and slashing. If you please, you may publish *anonymously*; it will perhaps be better; but I will battle my way against them all, like a porcupine.

‘ So you and Mr. Foscolo, &c., want me to undertake what you call a “great work?” an Epic Poem, I suppose, or some such pyramid. I’ll try no such thing; I hate tasks. And then “seven or eight years!” God send us all well this day three months, let alone years. If one’s years can’t be better employed than in sweating poesy, a man had better be a ditcher. And works, too!—is Childe Harold nothing? You have so many “*divine*” poems, is it nothing to have written a *human* one? without any of your worn-out machinery. Why, man, I could have spun the thoughts of the Four Cantos of that poem into twenty, had I wanted to book-make, and its passion into as many modern tragedies. Since you want *length*, you shall have enough of *Juan*, for I’ll make Fifty Cantos.

‘ And Foscolo, too! Why does *he* not do something more than the Letters of Ortis, and a tragedy, and pamphlets? He has good fifteen years more at his

‘ command than I have : what has he done all that
‘ time ?—proved his genius, doubtless, but not fixed
‘ its fame, nor done his utmost.

‘ Besides, I mean to write my best work in *Italian*,
‘ and it will take me nine years more thoroughly to
‘ master the language ; and then if my fancy exist,
‘ and I exist too, I will try what I *can* do *really*. As
‘ to the estimation of the English which you talk of,
‘ let them calculate what it is worth, before they insult
‘ me with their insolent condescension.

‘ I have not written for their pleasure. If they are
‘ pleased, it is that they chose to be so ; I have never
‘ flattered their opinions, nor their pride ; nor will I.
‘ Neither will I make ‘Ladies’ books’ ‘*al diletta le*
‘ *femine e la plebe.*’ I have written from the fulness
‘ of my mind, from passion, from impulse, from many
‘ motives, but not for their “sweet voices.”

‘ I know the precise worth of popular applause, for
‘ few scribblers have had more of it ; and if I chose
‘ to swerve into their paths, I could retain it, or resume
‘ it. But I neither love ye, nor fear ye ; and though
‘ I buy with ye and sell with ye, I will neither eat with
‘ ye, drink with ye, nor pray with ye. They made me,
‘ without any search, a species of popular idol ; they,
‘ without reason or judgment, beyond the caprice of
‘ their good pleasure, threw down the image from its
‘ pedestal : it was not broken with the fall, and they
‘ would, it seems, again replace it,—but they shall
‘ not.

‘ You ask about my health : about the beginning of
‘ the year I was in a state of great exhaustion, attended
‘ by such debility of stomach that nothing remained
‘ upon it ; and I was obliged to reform my “way of
‘ life,” which was conducting me from the “yellow

‘ leaf ” to the ground, with all deliberate speed. I
‘ am better in health and morals, and very much
‘ yours, &c.

‘ P.S. I have read Hodgson’s “ Friends.” He is
‘ right in defending Pope against the bastard pelicans
‘ of the poetical winter day, who add insult to their
‘ parricide, by sucking the blood of the parent of
‘ English *real* poetry—poetry without fault—and then
‘ spurning the bosom which fed them.’

It was about the time when the foregoing letter was written, and when, as we perceive, like the first return of reason after intoxication, a full consciousness of some of the evils of his late libertine course of life had broken upon him, that an attachment differing altogether, both in duration and devotion, from any of those that, since the dream of his boyhood, had inspired him, gained an influence over his mind which lasted through his few remaining years; and, undeniably wrong and immoral (even allowing for the Italian estimate of such frailties) as was the nature of the connexion to which this attachment led, we can hardly perhaps,—taking into account the far worse wrong from which it rescued and preserved him,—consider it otherwise than as an event fortunate both for his reputation and happiness.

The fair object of this last, and (with one signal exception) only *real* love of his whole life, was a young Romagnese lady, the daughter of Count Gamba, of Ravenna, and married, but a short time before Lord Byron first met with her, to an old and wealthy widower, of the same city, Count Guiccioli. Her husband had in early life been the friend of Alfieri, and had distinguished himself by his zeal in promoting

the establishment of a National Theatre, in which the talents of Alfieri and his own wealth were to be combined. Notwithstanding his age, and a character, as it appears, by no means reputable, his great opulence rendered him an object of ambition among the mothers of Ravenna, who, according to the too frequent maternal practice, were seen vying with each other in attracting so rich a purchaser for their daughters, and the young Teresa Gamba, then only eighteen, and just emancipated from a convent, was the selected victim.

The first time Lord Byron had ever seen this lady was in the autumn of 1818, when she made her appearance, soon after her marriage, at the house of the Countess Albrizzi, in all the gaiety of bridal array, and the first delight of exchanging a convent for the world. At this time, however, no acquaintance ensued between them;—it was not till the spring of the present year that, at an evening party of Madame Benzoni's, they were introduced to each other. The love that sprung out of this meeting was instantaneous and mutual,—though with the usual disproportion of sacrifice between the parties; such an event being, to the man, but one of the many scenes of life, while, with woman, it generally constitutes the whole drama. The young Italian found herself suddenly inspired with a passion, of which, till that moment, her mind could not have formed the least idea;—she had thought of love but as an amusement, and now became its slave. If at the outset, too, less slow to be won than an English-woman, no sooner did she begin to understand the full despotism of the passion than her heart shrunk from it as something terrible, and she would have escaped, but that the chain was already around her.

No words, however, can describe so simply and feel-

ingly as her own, the strong impression which their first meeting left upon her mind :—

‘ I became acquainted (says Madame Guiccioli) with
‘ Lord Byron in the April of 1819:—he was introduced
‘ to me at Venice, by the Countess Benzoni, at one of
‘ that lady’s parties. This introduction, which had so
‘ much influence over the lives of us both, took place
‘ contrary to our wishes, and had been permitted by
‘ us only from courtesy. For myself, more fatigued
‘ than usual that evening on account of the late hours
‘ they keep at Venice, I went with great repugnance
‘ to this party, and purely in obedience to Count Guic-
‘ cioli. Lord Byron, too, who was averse to forming
‘ new acquaintances,—alleging that he had entirely
‘ renounced all attachments, and was unwilling any
‘ more to expose himself to their consequences,—on
‘ being requested by the Countess Benzoni to allow
‘ himself to be presented to me, refused, and, at last,
‘ only assented from a desire to oblige her.

‘ His noble and exquisitely beautiful countenance,
‘ the tone of his voice, his manners, the thousand
‘ enchantments that surrounded him, rendered him so
‘ different and so superior a being to any whom I had
‘ hitherto seen, that it was impossible he should not
‘ have left the most profound impression upon me.
‘ From that evening, during the whole of my subse-
‘ quent stay at Venice, we met every day*.’

* ‘ Nell’ Aprile del 1819, io feci la conoscenza di Lord Byron; e mi
‘ fu presentato a Venezia dalla Contessa Benzoni nella di lei società.
‘ Questa presentazione che ebbe tante conseguenze per tutti e due fu
‘ fatta contro la volontà d’entrambi, e solo per condiscendenza l’abbiamo
‘ permessa. Io stanca più che mai quella sera per le ore tarde che si
‘ costuma fare in Venezia andai con molta ripugnanza e solo per ubbidire
‘ al Conte Guiccioli in quella società. Lord Byron che scansava di fare
‘ nuove conoscenze, dicendo sempre che aveva interamente rinunciato
‘ alle passioni e che non voleva esporsi più alle loro conseguenze, quando
‘ la Contessa Benzoni la pregò di volersi far presentare a me egli recusò,

LETTER 328.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, May 15th, 1819.*

‘ I have got your extract, and the “ Vampire.” I
 ‘ need not say it is *not mine*. There is a rule to go by:
 ‘ you are my publisher (till we quarrel), and what is
 ‘ not published by you is not written by me.

‘ Next week I set out for Romagna—at least, in all
 ‘ probability. You had better go on with the publica-
 ‘ tions, without waiting to hear farther, for I have other
 ‘ things in my head. “ Mazeppa” and the “ Ode”
 ‘ separate?—what think you? *Juan anonymous, with-*
 ‘ *out the Dedication*; for I won’t be shabby, and
 ‘ attack Southey under cloud of night.

‘ Yours, &c.’

In another letter on the subject of the Vampire, I
 find the following interesting particulars :—

‘ TO MR. ———.

‘ The story of Shelley’s agitation is true*. I can’t
 ‘ tell what seized him, for he don’t want courage. He

‘ e solo per la compiacenza glielo permise. La nobile e bellissima sua
 ‘ fisionomia, il suono della sua voce, le sue maniere, i mille incanti che
 ‘ lo circondavano lo rendevano un essere così differente, così superiore a
 ‘ tutti quelli che io aveva sino allora veduti che non potei a meno di non
 ‘ provarne la più profonda impressione. Da quella sera in poi in tutti i
 ‘ giorni che mi fermai in Venezia ei siamo sempre veduti.’—*MS.*

* This story, as given in the Preface to the ‘ Vampire,’ is as follows:
 ‘ It appears that one evening Lord B., Mr. P. B. Shelley, two ladies,
 ‘ and the gentleman before alluded to, after having perused a German
 ‘ work called Phantasmagoria, began relating ghost stories, when his
 ‘ lordship having recited the beginning of Christabel, then unpublished,
 ‘ the whole took so strong a hold of Mr. Shelley’s mind, that he suddenly
 ‘ started up, and ran out of the room. The physician and Lord Byron
 ‘ followed, and discovered him leaning against a mantel-piece, with cold
 ‘ drops of perspiration trickling down his face. After having given him
 ‘ something to refresh him, upon inquiring into the cause of his alarm,
 ‘ they found that his wild imagination having pictured to him the bosom
 ‘ of one of the ladies with eyes (which was reported of a lady in the neigh-
 ‘ bourhood where he lived), he was obliged to leave the room in order to
 ‘ destroy the impression.’

‘ was once with me in a gale of wind, in a small boat,
‘ right under the rocks between Meillerie and St. Gingo.
‘ We were five in the boat—a servant, two boatmen,
‘ and ourselves. The sail was mismanaged, and the
‘ boat was filling fast. He can’t swim. I stripped off
‘ my coat, made him strip off his, and take hold of an
‘ oar, telling him that I thought (being myself an
‘ expert swimmer) I could save him, if he would not
‘ struggle when I took hold of him—unless we got
‘ smashed against the rocks, which were high and
‘ sharp, with an awkward surf on them at that minute.
‘ We were then about a hundred yards from shore, and
‘ the boat in peril. He answered me with the greatest
‘ coolness, “that he had no notion of being saved, and
‘ that I would have enough to do to save myself, and
‘ begged not to trouble me.” Luckily, the boat righted,
‘ and, bailing, we got round a point into St. Gingo,
‘ where the inhabitants came down and embraced the
‘ boatmen on their escape, the wind having been high
‘ enough to tear up some huge trees from the Alps
‘ above us, as we saw next day.

‘ And yet the same Shelley, who was as cool as it
‘ was possible to be in such circumstances (of which I
‘ am no judge myself, as the chance of swimming natu-
‘ rally gives self-possession when near shore), certainly
‘ had the fit of phantasy which Polidori describes,
‘ though *not exactly* as he describes it.

‘ The story of the agreement to write the ghost-books
‘ is true; but the ladies are *not* sisters. Mary Godwin
‘ (now Mrs. Shelley) wrote Frankenstein, which you
‘ have reviewed, thinking it Shelley’s. Methinks it is
‘ a wonderful book for a girl of nineteen—*not* nine-
‘ teen, indeed, at that time. I enclose you the begin-
‘ ning of mine, by which you will see how far it resem-

‘ bles Mr. Colburn’s publication. If you choose to
‘ publish it, you may, *stating why*, and with such ex-
‘ planatory proem as you please. I never went on
‘ with it, as you will perceive by the date. I began
‘ it in an old account-book of Miss Milbanke’s, which
‘ I kept because it contains the word “Household,”
‘ written by her twice on the inside blank page of the
‘ covers, being the only two scraps I have in the world
‘ in her writing, except her name to the Deed of Sepa-
‘ ration. Her letters I sent back, except those of the
‘ quarrelling correspondence, and those, being docu-
‘ ments, are placed in the hands of a third person, with
‘ copies of several of my own ; so that I have no kind
‘ of memorial whatever of her, but these two words,—
‘ and her actions. I have torn the leaves containing
‘ the part of the Tale out of the book, and enclose
‘ them with this sheet.

‘ What do you mean? First you seem hurt by my
‘ letter, and then, in your next, you talk of its “power,”
‘ and so forth. “This is a d—d blind story, Jack ;
‘ but never mind, go on.” You may be sure I said
‘ nothing *on purpose* to plague you, but if you will
‘ put me “in a frenzy, I will never call you *Jack*
‘ again.” I remember nothing of the epistle at pre-
‘ sent.

‘ What do you mean by Polidori’s *Diary*? Why, I
‘ defy him to say anything about me, but he is welcome.
‘ I have nothing to reproach me with on his score, and
‘ I am much mistaken if that is not his *own* opinion.
‘ But why publish the names of the two girls? and in
‘ such a manner?—what a blundering piece of excul-
‘ pation! *He* asked Pictet, &c., to dinner, and of course
‘ was left to entertain them. I went into society *solely*
‘ to present *him* (as I told him), that he might return

‘ into good company if he chose ; it was the best thing
‘ for his youth and circumstances : for myself, I had
‘ done with society, and, having presented him, with-
‘ drew to my own “way of life.” It is true that I
‘ returned without entering Lady Dalrymple Hamil-
‘ ton’s, because I saw it full. It is true that Mrs.
‘ Hervey (she writes novels) fainted at my entrance
‘ into Coppet, and then came back again. On her
‘ fainting, the Duchess de Broglie exclaimed, “This
‘ is *too much*—at *sixty-five* years of age !”—I never
‘ gave “the English” an opportunity of avoiding me ;
‘ but I trust that, if ever I do, they will seize it. With
‘ regard to Mazeppa and the Ode, you may join or
‘ separate them, as you please, from the two Cantos.

‘ Don’t suppose I want to put you out of humour.
‘ I have a great respect for your good and gentlemanly
‘ qualities, and return your personal friendship towards
‘ me ; and although I think you a little spoilt by “vil-
‘ lanous company,”—wits, persons of honour about
‘ town, authors, and fashionables, together with your
‘ “I am just going to call at Carlton House, are you
‘ walking that way?”—I say, notwithstanding “pic-
‘ tures, taste, Shakspeare, and the musical glasses,”
‘ you deserve and possess the esteem of those whose
‘ esteem is worth having, and of none more (however
‘ useless it may be) than yours very truly, &c.

‘ P. S. Make my respects to Mr. Gifford. I am
‘ perfectly aware that “Don Juan” must set us all
‘ by the ears, but that is my concern, and my begin-
‘ ning. There will be the “Edinburgh,” and all, too,
‘ against it, so that, like “Rob Roy,” I shall have my
‘ hands full.’

LETTER 329.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, May 25th, 1819.*

‘ I have received no proofs by the last post, and
‘ shall probably have quitted Venice before the arrival
‘ of the next. There wanted a few stanzas to the
‘ termination of Canto First in the last proof; the next
‘ will, I presume, contain them, and the whole or a
‘ portion of Canto Second; but it will be idle to wait
‘ for further answers from me, as I have directed that
‘ my letters wait for my return (perhaps in a month,
‘ and probably so); therefore do not wait for further
‘ advice from me. You may as well talk to the wind,
‘ and better—for *it* will at least convey your accents a
‘ little further than they would otherwise have gone;
‘ whereas *I* shall neither echo nor acquiesce in your
‘ “exquisite reasons.” You may omit the *note* of
‘ reference to Hobhouse’s travels, in Canto Second,
‘ and you will put as motto to the whole—

‘ *Difficile est proprie communia dicere.*’—HORACE.

‘ A few days ago I sent you all I know of Polidori’s
‘ Vampire. He may do, say, or write, what he pleases,
‘ but I wish he would not attribute to me his own com-
‘ positions. If he has anything of mine in his posses-
‘ sion, the MS. will put it beyond controversy; but I
‘ scarcely think that any one who knows me would
‘ believe the thing in the Magazine to be mine, even
‘ if they saw it in my own hieroglyphics.

‘ I write to you in the agonies of a *sirocco*, which
‘ annihilates me; and I have been fool enough to do
‘ four things since dinner, which are as well omitted
‘ in very hot weather: 1stly, * * * *; 2dly, to
‘ play at billiards from 10 to 12, under the influence
‘ of lighted lamps, that doubled the heat; 3dly, to go

‘ afterwards into a red-hot conversazione of the
‘ Countess Benzoni’s; and 4thly, to begin this letter
‘ at three in the morning: but being begun, it must
‘ be finished.

‘ Ever very truly and affectionately yours,

‘ B.

‘ P. S. I petition for tooth-brushes, powder, mag-
‘ nesia, Macassar oil (or Russia), *the* sashes, and Sir
‘ Nl. Wraxall’s Memoirs of his own Times. I want,
‘ besides, a bull-dog, a terrier, and two Newfoundland
‘ dogs; and I want (is it Buck’s?) a life of *Richard 3d*,
‘ advertised by Longman *long, long, long* ago; I asked
‘ for it at least three years since. See Longman’s
‘ advertisements.’

About the middle of April, Madame Guiccioli had been obliged to quit Venice with her husband. Having several houses on the road from Venice to Ravenna, it was his habit to stop at these mansions, one after the other, in his journeys between the two cities; and from all these places the enamoured young Countess now wrote to her lover, expressing, in the most passionate and pathetic terms, her despair at leaving him. So utterly, indeed, did this feeling overpower her, that three times, in the course of her first day’s journey, she was seized with fainting-fits. In one of her letters, which I saw when at Venice, dated, if I recollect right, from ‘Cà Zen, Cavanelle di Po,’ she tells him that the solitude of this place, which she had before found irksome, was, now that one sole idea occupied her mind, become dear and welcome to her, and promises that, as soon as she arrives at Ravenna, ‘she will, according to his wish, avoid all
‘ general society, and devote herself to reading, music,

‘ domestic occupations, riding on horseback,—every-
‘ thing, in short, that she knew he would most like.’
What a change for a young and simple girl, who, but
a few weeks before, had thought only of society and
the world, but who now saw no other happiness but
in the hope of making herself worthy, by seclusion
and self-instruction, of the illustrious object of her
love !

On leaving this place, she was attacked with a
dangerous illness on the road, and arrived half dead
at Ravenna ; nor was it found possible to revive or
comfort her till an assurance was received from Lord
Byron, expressed with all the fervour of real passion,
that, in the course of the ensuing month, he would
pay her a visit. Symptoms of consumption, brought
on by her state of mind, had already shown them-
selves ; and, in addition to the pain which this sepa-
ration had caused her, she was also suffering much
grief from the loss of her mother, who, at this time,
died in giving birth to her twentieth child. Towards
the latter end of May she wrote to acquaint Lord Byron
that, having prepared all her relatives and friends to
expect him, he might now, she thought, venture to
make his appearance at Ravenna. Though, on the
lady’s account, hesitating as to the prudence of such
a step, he, in obedience to her wishes, on the 2d of
June, set out from La Mira (at which place he had
again taken a villa for the summer), and proceeded
towards Romagna.

From Padua he addressed a letter to Mr. Hoppner,
chiefly occupied with matters of household concern
which that gentleman had undertaken to manage for
him at Venice, but, on the immediate object of his
journey, expressing himself in a tone so light and jest-

ing, as it would be difficult for those not versed in his character to conceive that he could ever bring himself, while under the influence of a passion so sincere, to assume. But such is ever the wantonness of the mocking spirit, from which nothing,—not even love,—remains sacred; and which at last, for want of other food, turns upon himself. The same horror, too, of hypocrisy that led Lord Byron to exaggerate his own errors, led him also to disguise, under a seemingly heartless ridicule, all those natural and kindly qualities by which they were redeemed.

This letter from Padua concludes thus:—

‘ A journey in an Italian June is a conscription;
‘ and if I was not the most constant of men, I should
‘ now be swimming from the Lido, instead of smoking
‘ in the dust of Padua. Should there be letters from
‘ England, let them wait my return. And do look at
‘ my house and (not lands, but) waters, and scold;—
‘ and deal out the monies to Edgecombe* with an air
‘ of reluctance and a shake of the head—and put queer
‘ questions to him—and turn up your nose when he
‘ answers.

‘ Make my respect to the Consules—and to the
‘ Chevalier—and to Scotin—and to all the counts and
‘ countesses of our acquaintance.

‘ And believe me ever

‘ Your disconsolate and affectionate, &c.’

As a contrast to the strange levity of this letter, as well as in justice to the real earnestness of the passion, however censurable in all other respects, that

* A clerk of the English Consulate, whom he at this time employed to control his accounts.

now engrossed him, I shall here transcribe some stanzas which he wrote in the course of this journey to Romagna, and which, though already published, are not comprised in the regular collection of his works.

- ‘ River*, that rollest by the ancient walls,
‘ Where dwells the lady of my love, when she
‘ Walks by thy brink, and there perchance recalls
‘ A faint and fleeting memory of me ;
- ‘ What if thy deep and ample stream should be
‘ A mirror of my heart, where she may read
‘ The thousand thoughts I now betray to thee.
‘ Wild as thy wave, and headlong as thy speed !
- ‘ What do I say—a mirror of my heart ?
‘ Are not thy waters sweeping, dark, and strong ?
‘ Such as my feelings were and are, thou art ;
‘ And such as thou art were my passions long.
- ‘ Time may have somewhat tamed them,—not for ever ;
‘ Thou overflow’st thy banks, and not for aye
‘ Thy bosom overboils, congenial river !
‘ Thy floods subside, and mine have sunk away,
- ‘ But left long wrecks behind, and now again,
‘ Borne in our old unchanged career, we move ;
‘ Thou tendest wildly onwards to the main,
‘ And I—to loving *one* I should not love.
- ‘ The current I behold will sweep beneath
‘ Her native walls and murmur at her feet ;
‘ Her eyes will look on thee, when she shall breathe
‘ The twilight air, unharm’d by summer’s heat.
- ‘ She will look on thee,—I have look’d on thee,
‘ Full of that thought ; and, from that moment, ne’er
‘ Thy waters could I dream of, name, or see,
‘ Without the inseparable sigh for her !
- ‘ Her bright eyes will be imaged in thy stream,—
‘ Yes ! they will meet the wave I gaze on now :
‘ Mine cannot witness, even in a dream,
‘ That happy wave repass me in its flow !

- ‘ The wave that bears my tears returns no more :
 ‘ Will she return by whom that wave shall sweep ?—
 ‘ Both tread thy banks, both wander on thy shore,
 ‘ I by thy source, she by the dark-blue deep.
 ‘ But that which keepeth us apart is not
 ‘ Distance, nor depth of wave, nor space of earth,
 ‘ But the distraction of a various lot,
 ‘ As various as the climates of our birth.
 ‘ A stranger loves the lady of the land,
 ‘ Born far beyond the mountains, but his blood
 ‘ Is all meridian, as if never fann’d
 ‘ By the black wind that chills the polar flood.
 ‘ My blood is all meridian ; were it not,
 ‘ I had not left my clime, nor should I be,
 ‘ In spite of tortures, ne’er to be forgot,
 ‘ A slave again of love,—at least of thee.
 ‘ ’Tis vain to struggle—let me perish young—
 ‘ Live as I lived, and love as I have loved ;
 ‘ To dust if I return, from dust I sprung,
 ‘ And then, at least, my heart can ne’er be moved.’

On arriving at Bologna and receiving no further intelligence from the Contessa, he began to be of opinion, as we shall perceive in the annexed interesting letters, that he should act most prudently, for all parties, by returning to Venice.

LETTER 330.

TO MR. HOPFNER.

‘ Bologna, June 6th, 1819.

‘ I am at length joined to Bologna, where I am
 ‘ settled like a sausage, and shall be broiled like one,
 ‘ if this weather continues. Will you thank Mengaldo
 ‘ on my part for the Ferrara acquaintance, which was
 ‘ a very agreeable one. I stayed two days at Ferrara,
 ‘ and was much pleased with the Count Mosti, and the
 ‘ little the shortness of the time permitted me to see
 ‘ of his family. I went to his conversazione, which is
 ‘ very far superior to anything of the kind at Venice—
 ‘ the women almost all young—several pretty—and the

‘ men courteous and cleanly. The lady of the man-
 ‘ sion, who is young, lately married, and with child,
 ‘ appeared very pretty by candlelight (I did not see her
 ‘ by day), pleasing in her manners, and very lady-like,
 ‘ or thorough-bred, as we call it in England,—a kind
 ‘ of thing which reminds one of a racer, an antelope,
 ‘ or an Italian greyhound. She seems very fond of
 ‘ her husband, who is amiable and accomplished; he
 ‘ has been in England two or three times, and is young.
 ‘ The sister, a Countess somebody—I forget what—
 ‘ (they are both Maffei by birth, and Veronese of
 ‘ course)—is a lady of more display; she sings and
 ‘ plays divinely; but I thought she was a d—d long
 ‘ time about it. Her likeness to Madame Flahaut
 ‘ (Miss Mercer that was) is something quite extra-
 ‘ ordinary.

‘ I had but a bird’s eye view of these people, and
 ‘ shall not probably see them again; but I am very
 ‘ much obliged to Mengaldo for letting me see them
 ‘ at all. Whenever I meet with anything agreeable
 ‘ in this world, it surprises me so much, and pleases
 ‘ me so much (when my passions are not interested
 ‘ one way or the other), that I go on wondering for a
 ‘ week to come. I feel, too, in great admiration of the
 ‘ Cardinal Legate’s red stockings.

‘ I found, too, such a pretty epitaph in the Certosa
 ‘ cemetery, or rather two: one was

‘ Martini Luigi
 ‘ Implora pace;

‘ the other,

‘ Lucrezia Picini
 ‘ Implora eterna quiete.

‘ That was all; but it appears to me that these two
 ‘ and three words comprise and compress all that can

‘ be said on the subject,—and then, in Italian, they
‘ are absolute music. They contain doubt, hope, and
‘ humility; nothing can be more pathetic than the
‘ “implora” and the modesty of the request;—they
‘ have had enough of life—they want nothing but rest
‘ —they implore it, and “eterna quiete.” It is like a
‘ Greek inscription in some good old heathen “City
‘ of the Dead.” Pray, if I am shovelled into the Lido
‘ churchyard in your time, let me have the “implora
‘ pace,” and nothing else, for my epitaph. I never
‘ met with any, ancient or modern, that pleased me a
‘ tenth part so much.

‘ In about a day or two after you receive this letter,
‘ I will thank you to desire Edgecombe to prepare for
‘ my return. I shall go back to Venice before I vil-
‘ lage on the Brenta. I shall stay but a few days in
‘ Bologna. I am just going out to see sights, but shall
‘ not present my introductory letters for a day or two,
‘ till I have run over again the place and pictures; nor
‘ perhaps at all, if I find that I have books and sights
‘ enough to do without the inhabitants. After that,
‘ I shall return to Venice, where you may expect me
‘ about the eleventh, or perhaps sooner. Pray make
‘ my thanks acceptable to Mengaldo; my respects to
‘ the Consules, and to Mr. Scott.

‘ I hope my daughter is well.

‘ Ever yours, and truly.

‘ P.S. I went over the Ariosto MS. &c. &c. again at
‘ Ferrara, with the castle, and cell, and house, &c. &c.

‘ One of the Ferrarese asked me if I knew “Lord
‘ Byron,” an acquaintance of his, *now* at Naples. I
‘ told him “*No!*” which was true both ways; for I
‘ knew not the impostor, and in the other, no one
‘ knows himself. He stared when told that I was “the

‘ real Simon Pure.” Another asked me if I had *not*
‘ translated “ Tasso.” You see what *Fame* is ! how
‘ accurate ! how boundless ! I don’t know how others
‘ feel, but I am always the lighter and the better looked
‘ on when I have got rid of mine ; it sits on me like
‘ armour on the Lord Mayor’s champion ; and I got rid
‘ of all the husk of literature, and the attendant babble,
‘ by answering, that I had not translated Tasso, but a
‘ namesake had ; and by the blessing of Heaven, I
‘ looked so little like a poet, that everybody believed
‘ me.’

LETTER 331.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Bologna, June 7th, 1819.*

‘ Tell Mr. Hobhouse that I wrote to him a few
‘ days ago from Ferrara. It will therefore be idle in
‘ him or you to wait for any further answers or returns
‘ of proofs from Venice, as I have directed that no
‘ English letters be sent after me. The publication
‘ can be proceeded in without, and I am already sick
‘ of your remarks, to which I think not the least atten-
‘ tion ought to be paid.

‘ Tell Mr. Hobhouse that, since I wrote to him, I
‘ had availed myself of my Ferrara letters, and found
‘ the society much younger and better there than at
‘ Venice. I am very much pleased with the little the
‘ shortness of my stay permitted me to see of the Gon-
‘ faloniere Count Mosti, and his family and friends in
‘ general.

‘ I have been picture-gazing this morning at the
‘ famous Domenichino and Guido, both of which are
‘ superlative. I afterwards went to the beautiful ceme-
‘ tery of Bologna, beyond the walls, and found, besides
‘ the superb burial-ground, an original of a Custode,

‘ who reminded one of the grave-digger in Hamlet. He
‘ has a collection of capuchins’ skulls, labelled on the
‘ forehead, and taking down one of them, said, “ This
‘ was Brother Desiderio Berro, who died at forty—
‘ one of my best friends. I begged his head of his
‘ brethren after his decease, and they gave it me. I
‘ put it in lime, and then boiled it. Here it is, teeth
‘ and all, in excellent preservation. He was the mer-
‘ riest, cleverest fellow I ever knew. Wherever he went,
‘ he brought joy; and whenever any one was melan-
‘ choly, the sight of him was enough to make him
‘ cheerful again. He walked so actively, you might
‘ have taken him for a dancer—he joked—he laughed
‘ —oh! he was such a Frate as I never saw before, nor
‘ ever shall again!”

‘ He told me that he had himself planted all the
‘ cypresses in the cemetery; that he had the greatest
‘ attachment to them and to his dead people; that
‘ since 1801 they had buried fifty-three thousand per-
‘ sons. In showing some older monuments, there was
‘ that of a Roman girl of twenty, with a bust by Ber-
‘ nini. She was a princess Barlorini, dead two centu-
‘ ries ago: he said that, on opening her grave, they
‘ had found her hair complete, and “ as yellow as gold.”
‘ Some of the epitaphs at Ferrara pleased me more
‘ than the more splendid monuments at Bologna; for
‘ instance:—

‘ Martini Luigi

‘ Implora pace;

‘ Lucrezia Picini

‘ Implora eterna quiete.

‘ Can anything be more full of pathos? Those few
‘ words say all that can be said or sought: the dead
‘ had had enough of life; all they wanted was rest,

‘ and this they *implore* ! There is all the helplessness,
 ‘ and humble hope, and deathlike prayer, that can
 ‘ arise from the grave—“ *implora pace* *.” I hope,
 ‘ whoever may survive me, and shall see me put in the
 ‘ foreigners’ burying-ground at the Lido, within the
 ‘ fortress by the Adriatic, will see those two words,
 ‘ and no more, put over me. I trust they won’t think
 ‘ of “ pickling, and bringing me home to Clod or
 ‘ Blunderbuss Hall.” I am sure my bones would not
 ‘ rest in an English grave, or my clay mix with the
 ‘ earth of that country. I believe the thought would
 ‘ drive me mad on my deathbed, could I suppose that
 ‘ any of my friends would be base enough to convey
 ‘ my carcass back to your soil. I would not even feed
 ‘ your worms, if I could help it.

‘ So, as Shakspeare says of Mowbray, the banished
 ‘ Duke of Norfolk, who died at Venice (see Richard 2d),
 ‘ that he, after fighting

‘ Against black Pagans, Turks, and Saracens,
 ‘ And toil’d with works of war, retired himself
 ‘ To Italy, and there, at *Venice*, gave
 ‘ His body to that *pleasant* country’s earth,
 ‘ And his pure soul unto his captain, Christ,
 ‘ Under whose colours he had fought so long.’

‘ Before I left Venice, I had returned to you your
 ‘ late, and Mr. Hobhouse’s sheets of Juan. Don’t wait
 ‘ for further answers from me, but address yours to
 ‘ Venice, as usual. I know nothing of my own move-

* Though Lord Byron, like most other persons, in writing to different friends, was sometimes led to repeat the same circumstances and thoughts, there is, from the ever ready fertility of his mind, much less of such repetition in his correspondence than in that, perhaps, of any other multifarious letter-writer ; and, in the instance before us, where the same facts and reflections are, for the second time, introduced, it is with such new touches, both of thought and expression, as render them, even a second time, interesting ;—what is wanting in the novelty of the matter being made up by the new aspect given to it.

‘ments; I may return there in a few days, or not for
‘some time. All this depends on circumstances. I
‘left Mr. Hoppner very well. My daughter Allegra
‘was well too, and is growing pretty; her hair is
‘growing darker, and her eyes are blue. Her temper
‘and her ways, Mr. Hoppner says, are like mine, as
‘well as her features: she will make, in that case, a
‘manageable young lady.

‘I have never heard anything of Ada, the little
‘Electra of my Mycenæ. But there will come a day
‘of reckoning, even if I should not live to see it*.
‘What a long letter I have scribbled!

‘Yours, &c.

‘P.S. Here, as in Greece, they strew flowers on
‘the tombs. I saw a quantity of rose-leaves, and
‘entire roses, scattered over the graves at Ferrara. It
‘has the most pleasing effect you can imagine.’

While he was thus lingering irresolute at Bologna, the Countess Guiccioli had been attacked with an intermittent fever, the violence of which, combining with the absence of a confidential person to whom she had been in the habit of intrusting her letters, prevented her from communicating with him. At length, anxious to spare him the disappointment of finding her so ill

* There were, in the former edition, both here and in a subsequent letter, some passages reflecting upon the late Sir Samuel Romilly, which, in my anxiety to lay open the workings of Lord Byron's mind upon a subject in which so much of his happiness and character were involved, I had been induced to retain, though aware of the erroneous impression under which they were written;—the evident morbidness of the feeling that dictated the attack, and the high, stainless reputation of the person assailed, being sufficient, I thought, to neutralize any ill effects such reflections might otherwise have produced. As I find it, however, to be the opinion of all those whose opinions I most respect, that, even with these antidotes, such an attack upon such a man ought not to be left on record, I willingly expunge all traces of it from my pages.

on his arrival, she had begun a letter, requesting that he would remain at Bologna till the visit to which she looked forward should bring her there also; and was in the act of writing, when a friend came in to announce the arrival of an English lord in Ravenna. She could not doubt for an instant that it was her noble lover; and he had, in fact, notwithstanding his declaration to Mr. Hoppner that it was his intention to return to Venice immediately, wholly altered this resolution before the letter announcing it was despatched,—the following words being written on the outside cover:—
 ‘ I am just setting off for Ravenna, June 8, 1819.—
 ‘ I changed my mind this morning, and decided to
 ‘ go on.’

The reader, however, shall have Madame Guiccioli’s own account of these events, which, fortunately for the interest of my narration, I am enabled to communicate.

‘ On my departure from Venice, he had promised to
 ‘ come and see me at Ravenna. Dante’s tomb, the
 ‘ classical pine wood *, the relics of antiquity which
 ‘ are to be found in that place, afforded a sufficient
 ‘ pretext for me to invite him to come, and for him to
 ‘ accept my invitation. He came, in fact, in the month
 ‘ of June, arriving at Ravenna on the day of the festival
 ‘ of the Corpus Domini; while I, attacked by a consump-
 ‘ tive complaint, which had its origin from the moment
 ‘ of my quitting Venice, appeared on the point of death.
 ‘ The arrival of a distinguished foreigner at Ravenna,

* ‘ Tal qual di ramo in ramo si raccoglie
 ‘ Per la pineta in sul lito di Chiassi,
 ‘ Quando Eolo Scirocco fuor discioglie.’

DANTE, PURG. CANTO XXVIII.

Dante himself (says Mr. Carey, in one of the notes on his admirable translation of this poet) ‘ perhaps wandered in this wood during his abode
 ‘ with Guido Novello da Polenta.’

‘ a town so remote from the routes ordinarily followed
‘ by travellers, was an event which gave rise to a good
‘ deal of conversation. His motives for such a visit
‘ became the subject of discussion, and these he him-
‘ self afterwards involuntarily divulged; for having
‘ made some inquiries with a view to paying me a visit,
‘ and being told that it was unlikely that he would
‘ ever see me again, as I was at the point of death, he
‘ replied, if such were the case, he hoped that he
‘ should die also; which circumstance, being repeated,
‘ revealed the object of his journey. Count Guiccioli,
‘ having been acquainted with Lord Byron at Venice,
‘ went to visit him now, and in the hope that his pre-
‘ sence might amuse, and be of some use to me in the
‘ state in which I then found myself, invited him to
‘ call upon me. He came the day following. It is
‘ impossible to describe the anxiety he showed,—the
‘ delicate attentions that he paid me. For a long time
‘ he had perpetually medical books in his hands; and
‘ not trusting my physicians, he obtained permission
‘ from Count Guiccioli to send for a very clever phy-
‘ sician, a friend of his, in whom he placed great con-
‘ fidence. The attentions of Professor Aglietti (for
‘ so this celebrated Italian was called), together with
‘ tranquillity, and the inexpressible happiness which I
‘ experienced in Lord Byron’s society, had so good an
‘ effect on my health, that only two months afterwards
‘ I was able to accompany my husband in a tour he was
‘ obliged to make to visit his various estates*.’

* ‘ Partendo io da Venezia egli promise di venir a vedermi a Ravenna.
‘ La Tomba di Dante, il classico bosco di pini, gli avvanzi di antichità
‘ che a Ravenna si trovano davano a me ragioni plausibili per invitarlo a
‘ venire, ed a lui per accettare l’invito. Egli venne difatti nel mese
‘ Guigno, e giunse a Ravenna nel giorno della Solennità del Corpus Do-
‘ mini, mentre io attaccata da una malattia de consunzione ch’ ebbe
‘ principio dalla mia partenza da Venezia ero vicina a morire. L’arrivo

LETTER 332.

TO MR. HOPPNER.

‘ *Ravenna, June 20th, 1819.*

‘ I wrote to you from Padua, and from Bologna,
 ‘ and since from Ravenna. I find my situation very
 ‘ agreeable, but want my horses very much, there being
 ‘ good riding in the environs. I can fix no time for
 ‘ my return to Venice—it may be soon or late—or not
 ‘ at all—it all depends on the Donna, whom I found
 ‘ very seriously in *bed* with a cough and spitting of
 ‘ blood, &c., all of which has subsided. I found all
 ‘ the people here firmly persuaded that she would
 ‘ never recover;—they were mistaken, however.

‘ My letters were useful as far as I employed them;
 ‘ and I like both the place and people, though I don’t
 ‘ trouble the latter more than I can help. *She* ma-
 ‘ nages very well—but if I come away with a stiletto
 ‘ in my gizzard some fine afternoon, I shall not be
 ‘ astonished. I can’t make *him* out at all—he visits
 ‘ me frequently, and takes me out (like Whittington,
 ‘ the Lord Mayor) in a coach and *six* horses. The

‘ in Ravenna d’un forestiero distinto, in un paese così lontano dalle
 ‘ strade che ordinariamente tengono i viaggiatori era un avvenimento
 ‘ del quale molto si parlava, indagandosene i motivi, che involontaria-
 ‘ mente poi egli feci conoscere. Perchè avendo egli domandato di me
 ‘ per venire a vedermi ed essendogli risposto “ che non potrebbe vedermi
 ‘ più perchè ero vicina a morire ”—egli rispose che in quel caso voleva
 ‘ morire egli pure; la qual cosa essendosi poi ripetata si conobbe così
 ‘ l’oggetto del suo viaggio.

‘ Il Conte Guiccioli visitò Lord Byron, essendolo conosciuto in Vene-
 ‘ zia, e nella speranza che la di lui compagnia potesse distrarmi ed esser-
 ‘ mi di qualche giovamento nello stato in cui mi trovavo egli lo invitò di
 ‘ venire a visitarmi. Il giorno appresso egli venne. Non si potrebbero
 ‘ descrivere le cure, i pensieri delicati, quanto egli fece per me. Per
 ‘ molto tempo egli non ebbe per le mani che dei Libri di Medicina; e
 ‘ poco confidandosi nel miei medici ottenne dal Conte Guiccioli il per-
 ‘ messo di far venire un valente medico di lui amico nel quale egli aveva
 ‘ molta confidenza. Le cure del Professore Aglietti (così si chiama
 ‘ questo distinto Italiano) la tranquillità, anzi la felicità inesprimibile che
 ‘ mi cagionava la presenza di Lord Byron migliorarono così rapidamente
 ‘ la mia salute che entro lo spazio di due mesi potei seguire mio marito
 ‘ in un giro che egli doveva fare per le sue terre.’—*MS.*

‘ fact appears to be, that he is completely *governed* by
 ‘ her—for that matter, so am I*. The people here
 ‘ don’t know what to make of us, as he had the cha-
 ‘ racter of jealousy with all his wives—this is the third.
 ‘ He is the richest of the Ravennese, by their own
 ‘ account, but is not popular among them. Now do,
 ‘ pray, send off Augustine, and carriage and cattle, to
 ‘ Bologna, without fail or delay, or I shall lose my
 ‘ remaining shred of senses. Don’t forget this. My
 ‘ coming, going, and everything, depend upon HER
 ‘ entirely, just as Mrs. Hoppner (to whom I remit my
 ‘ reverences) said in the true spirit of female prophecy.
 ‘ You are but a shabby fellow not to have written
 ‘ before. ‘ And I am truly yours, &c.’

LETTER 333.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Ravenna, June 29th, 1819.*

‘ The letters have been forwarded from Venice;
 ‘ but I trust that you will not have waited for further
 ‘ alterations—I will make none.

‘ I have no time to return you the proofs—publish
 ‘ without them. I am glad you think the poesy good;
 ‘ and as to “thinking of the effect,” think *you* of the
 ‘ sale, and leave me to pluck the porcupines who may
 ‘ point their quills at you.

‘ I have been here (at Ravenna) these four weeks,
 ‘ having left Venice a month ago;—I came to see my

* That this task of ‘governing’ him was one of more ease than, from the ordinary view of his character, might be concluded, I have more than once, in these pages, expressed my opinion, and shall here quote, in corroboration of it, the remark of his own servant (founded on an observation of more than twenty years), in speaking of his master’s matrimonial fate:—‘It is very odd, but I never yet knew a lady that could not manage my Lord, *except* my Lady.’

‘More knowledge,’ says Johnson, ‘may be gained of a man’s real character by a short conversation with one of his servants than from the most formal and studied narrative.’

‘ “ Amica,” the Countess Guiccioli, who has been, and
‘ still continues, very unwell. * * She is only
‘ twenty years old, but not of a strong constitution. She
‘ has a perpetual cough and an intermittent fever, but
‘ bears up most *gallantly* in every sense of the word.
‘ Her husband (this is his third wife) is the richest
‘ noble of Ravenna, and almost of Romagna; he is
‘ also *not* the youngest, being upwards of threescore,
‘ but in good preservation. All this will appear
‘ strange to you, who do not understand the meridian
‘ morality, nor our way of life in such respects, and I
‘ cannot at present expound the difference;—but you
‘ would find it much the same in these parts. At
‘ Faenza there is Lord * * * * with an opera girl; and
‘ at the inn in the same town is a Neapolitan Prince,
‘ who serves the wife of the Gonfaloniere of that city.
‘ I am on duty here—so you see “ *Così fan tutti e*
‘ *tutte.*”

‘ I have my horses here, *saddle* as well as carriage,
‘ and ride or drive every day in the forest, the *Pineta*,
‘ the scene of Boccaccio’s novel, and Dryden’s fable of
‘ Honoria, &c. &c.; and I see my Dama every day;
‘ but I feel seriously uneasy about her health, which
‘ seems very precarious. In losing her, I should lose
‘ a being who has run great risks on my account, and
‘ whom I have every reason to love—but I must not
‘ think this possible. I do not know what I *should* do
‘ if she died, but I ought to blow my brains out—and
‘ I hope that I should. Her husband is a very polite
‘ personage, but I wish he would not carry me out in
‘ his coach and six, like Whittington and his cat.

‘ You ask me if I mean to continue D. J., &c. How
‘ should I know? What encouragement do you give
‘ me, all of you, with your nonsensical prudery?—

‘ publish the two Cantos, and then you will see. I
‘ desired Mr. Kinnaird to speak to you on a little matter
‘ of business ; either he has not spoken, or you have
‘ not answered. You are a pretty pair, but I will be
‘ even with you both. I perceive that Mr. Hobhouse
‘ has been challenged by Major Cartwright—Is the
‘ Major “so cunning of fence?”—why did not they
‘ fight?—they ought. ‘ Yours, &c.’

LETTER 334.

TO MR. HOPPNER.

‘ *Ravenna, July 2d, 1819.*

‘ Thanks for your letter and for Madame’s. I will
‘ answer it directly. Will you recollect whether I did
‘ not consign to you one or two receipts of Madame
‘ Mocenigo’s for house rent—(I am not sure of this,
‘ but think I did—if not, they will be in my drawers)
‘ —and will you desire Mr. Dorville* to have the
‘ goodness to see if Edgecombe has *receipts* to all pay-
‘ ments *hitherto* made by him on my account, and that
‘ there are *no debts* at Venice? On your answer, I
‘ shall send order of further remittance to carry on my
‘ household expenses, as my present return to Venice
‘ is very problematical ; and it may happen—but I
‘ can say nothing positive—everything with me being
‘ indecisive and undecided, except the disgust which
‘ Venice excites when fairly compared with any other
‘ city in this part of Italy. When I say *Venice*, I mean
‘ the *Venetians*—the city itself is superb as its history
‘ —but the people are what I never thought them til
‘ they taught me to think so.

‘ The best way will be to leave Allegra with Antonio’s
‘ spouse till I can decide something about her and

* The Vice-Consul of Mr. Hoppner.

‘ myself—but I thought that you would have had an
‘ answer from Mrs. V——r*. You have had bore
‘ enough with me and mine already.

‘ I greatly fear that the Guiccioli is going into a
‘ consumption, to which her constitution tends. Thus
‘ it is with everything and everybody for whom I feel
‘ anything like a real attachment;—“War, death, or
‘ discord, doth lay siege to them.” I never even
‘ could keep alive a dog that I liked or that liked me.
‘ Her symptoms are obstinate cough of the lungs, and
‘ occasional fever, &c. &c., and there are latent causes
‘ of an eruption in the skin, which she foolishly re-
‘ pelled into the system two years ago; but I have
‘ made them send her case to Aglietti; and have
‘ begged him to come—if only for a day or two—to
‘ consult upon her state.

‘ If it would not bore Mr. Dorville, I wish he would
‘ keep an eye on E——— and on my other ragamuf-
‘ fins. I might have more to say, but I am absorbed
‘ about La Gui. and her illness. I cannot tell you the
‘ effect it has upon me.

‘ The horses came, &c. &c., and I have been gal-
‘ loping through the pine forest daily.

‘ Believe me, &c.

‘ P.S. My benediction on Mrs. Hoppner, a pleasant
‘ journey among the Bernese tyrants, and safe return.
‘ You ought to bring back a Platonic Bernese for my

* An English widow lady, of considerable property in the north of England, who, having seen the little Allegra at Mr. Hoppner's, took an interest in the poor child's fate, and having no family of her own, offered to adopt and provide for this little girl, if Lord Byron would consent to renounce all claim to her. At first he seemed not disinclined to enter into her views—so far, at least, as giving permission that she should take the child with her to England and educate it; but the entire surrender of his paternal authority he would by no means consent to. The proposed arrangement accordingly was never carried into effect.

‘ reformation. If anything happens to my present
‘ Amica, I have done with the passion for ever—it is
‘ my *last* love. As to libertinism, I have sickened
‘ myself of that, as was natural in the way I went on,
‘ and I have at least derived that advantage from vice,
‘ to *love* in the better sense of the word. *This* will be
‘ my last adventure—I can hope no more to inspire
‘ attachment, and I trust never again to feel it.’

The impression which, I think, cannot but be entertained, from some passages of these letters, of the real fervour and sincerity of his attachment to Madame Guiccioli*, would be still further confirmed by the perusal of his letters to that lady herself, both from Venice and during his present stay at Ravenna—all bearing, throughout, the true marks both of affection and passion. Such effusions, however, are but little suited to the general eye. It is the tendency of all strong feeling, from dwelling constantly on the same idea, to be monotonous; and those often-repeated vows and verbal endearments, which make the charm of true love-letters to the parties concerned in them, must for ever render even the best of them cloying to

* ‘ During my illness,’ says Madame Guiccioli, in her recollections of this period, ‘ he was for ever near me, paying me the most amiable attentions, and when I became convalescent he was constantly at my side. In society, at the theatre, riding, walking, he never was absent from me. Being deprived at that time of his books, his horses, and all that occupied him at Venice, I begged him to gratify me by writing something on the subject of Dante, and, with his usual facility and rapidity, he composed his “ Prophecy.” ’—‘ Durante la mia malattia L. B. era sempre presso di me, prestandomi le più sensibili cure, e quando passai allo stato di convalescenza egli era sempre al mio fianco;—e in società, e al teatro, e cavalcando, e passeggiando egli non si allontanava mai da me. In quel’ epoca essendo egli privo de’ suoi libri, e de’ suoi cavalli e di tuttociò che lo occupava in Venezia io lo pregai di volersi occupare per me scrivendo qualche cosa sul Dante; ed egli colla usata sua facilità e rapidità scrisse la sua Profezia.’

others. Those of Lord Byron to Madame Guiccioli, which are for the most part in Italian, and written with a degree of ease and correctness attained rarely by foreigners, refer chiefly to the difficulties thrown in the way of their meetings,—not so much by the husband himself, who appears to have liked and courted Lord Byron's society, as by the watchfulness of other relatives, and the apprehension felt by the lovers themselves lest their imprudence should give uneasiness to the father of the lady, Count Gamba, a gentleman to whose good-nature and amiableness of character all who know him bear testimony.

In the near approaching departure of the young Countess for Bologna, Lord Byron foresaw a risk of their being again separated; and under the impatience of this prospect, though through the whole of his preceding letters the fear of committing her by any imprudence seems to have been his ruling thought, he now, with that wilfulness of the moment which has so often sealed the destiny of years, proposed that she should, at once, abandon her husband and fly with him:—*'c'è uno solo rimedio efficace,'* he says,—*'cioè d'andar via insieme.'* To an Italian wife, almost everything but this is permissible. The same system which so indulgently allows her a lover, as one of the regular appendages of her matrimonial establishment, takes care also to guard against all unseemly consequences of this privilege; and in return for such convenient facilities of wrong exacts rigidly an observance of all the appearances of right. Accordingly, the open step of deserting the husband for the lover, instead of being considered, as in England, but a sign and sequel of transgression, takes rank, in Italian morality, as the main transgression itself; and being an offence, too,

rendered wholly unnecessary by the latitude otherwise enjoyed, becomes, from its rare occurrence, no less monstrous than odious.

The proposition, therefore, of her noble lover seemed to the young Contessa little less than sacrilege, and the agitation of her mind, between the horrors of such a step, and her eager readiness to give up all and everything for him she loved, was depicted most strongly in her answer to the proposal. In a subsequent letter, too, the romantic girl even proposed, as a means of escaping the ignominy of an elopement, that she should, like another Juliet, 'pass for dead,'—assuring him that there were many easy ways of effecting such a deception.

LETTER 335.

TO MR. MURRAY.

Ravenna, August 1st, 1819.

[Address your Answer to Venice, however.]

' Don't be alarmed. You will see me defend my-
' self gaily—that is, if I happen to be in spirits; and
' by *spirits*, I don't mean your meaning of the word,
' but the spirit of a bull-dog when pinched, or a bull
' when pinned; it is then that they make best sport;
' and as my sensations under an attack are probably a
' happy compound of the united energies of these
' amiable animals, you may perhaps see what Marrall
' calls "rare sport," and some good tossing and
' goring, in the course of the controversy. But I
' must be in the right cue first, and I doubt I am
' almost too far off to be in a sufficient fury for the
' purpose. And then I have effeminated and enervated
' myself with love and the summer in these last two
' months.

' I wrote to Mr. Hobhouse the other day, and fore-

‘ told that Juan would either fall entirely or succeed
‘ completely; there will be no medium. Appearances
‘ are not favourable; but as you write the day after
‘ publication, it can hardly be decided what opinion
‘ will predominate. You seem in a fright, and doubt-
‘ less with cause. Come what may, I never will flatter
‘ the million’s canting in any shape. Circumstances
‘ may or may not have placed me at times in a situa-
‘ tion to lead the public opinion, but the public opi-
‘ nion never led, nor ever shall lead, me. I will not sit
‘ on a degraded throne; so pray put Messrs. * * or * *,
‘ or Tom Moore, or * * * upon it; they will all of them
‘ be transported with their coronation.

‘ P.S. The Countess Guiccioli is much better than
‘ she was. I sent you, before leaving Venice, the real
‘ original sketch which gave rise to the “ Vampire,”
‘ &c.—Did you get it?’

This letter was, of course, (like most of those he addressed to England at this time,) intended to be shown; and having been, among others, permitted to see it, I took occasion, in my very next communication to Lord Byron, to twit him a little with the passage in it relating to myself,—the only one, as far as I can learn, that ever fell from my noble friend’s pen during our intimacy, in which he has spoken of me otherwise than in terms of kindness and the most undeserved praise. Transcribing his own words, as well as I could recollect them, at the top of my letter, I added, underneath, ‘ Is *this* the way you speak of your friends?’ Not long after, too, when visiting him at Venice, I remember making the same harmless little sneer a subject of raillery with him; but he declared boldly that he had no recollection of having ever written such

words, and that, if they existed, ‘ he must have been half
‘ asleep when he wrote them.’

I have mentioned this circumstance merely for the purpose of remarking, that with a sensibility vulnerable at so many points as his was, and acted upon by an imagination so long practised in self-tormenting, it is only wonderful that, thinking constantly, as his letters prove him to have been, of distant friends, and receiving from few or none equal proofs of thoughtfulness in return, he should not more frequently have broken out into such sallies against the absent and ‘ unreplying.’ For myself, I can only say that, from the moment I began to unravel his character, the most slighting and even acrimonious expressions that I could have heard he had, in a fit of spleen, uttered against me, would have no more altered my opinion of his disposition, nor disturbed my affection for him, than the momentary clouding over of a bright sky could leave an impression on the mind of gloom, after its shadow had passed away.

LETTER 336.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Ravenna, August 9th, 1819.*

‘ Talking of blunders reminds me of Ireland—
‘ Ireland of Moore. What is this I see in Galignani
‘ about “ Bermuda—agent—deputy—appeal—attach-
‘ ment,” &c.? What is the matter? Is it anything
‘ in which his friends can be of use to him? Pray
‘ inform me.

‘ Of Don Juan I hear nothing further from *you* ;
‘ * * *, but the papers don’t seem so fierce as the letter
‘ you sent me seemed to anticipate, by their extracts at
‘ least in Galignani’s Messenger. I never saw such a
‘ set of fellows as you are ! And then the pains taken

‘ to exculpate the modest publisher—he remonstrated,
 ‘ forsooth ! I will write a preface that *shall* exculpate
 ‘ *you* and * * * &c. completely, on that point; but, at
 ‘ the same time, I will cut you up, like gourds. You
 ‘ have no more soul than the Count de Caylus (who
 ‘ assured his friends, on his death-bed, that he had
 ‘ none, and that *he* must know better than they whether
 ‘ he had one or no), and no more blood than a water-
 ‘ melon ! And I see there hath been asterisks, and
 ‘ what Perry used to call “ domned cutting and slash-
 ‘ ing ”—but, never mind.

‘ I write in haste. To-morrow I set off for Bologna.
 ‘ I write to you with thunder, lightning, &c. and all the
 ‘ winds of heaven whistling through my hair, and the
 ‘ racket of preparation to boot. “ My mistress dear,
 ‘ who hath fed my heart upon smiles and wine ” for
 ‘ the last two months, set off with her husband for
 ‘ Bologna this morning, and it seems that I follow him
 ‘ at three to-morrow morning. I cannot tell how our
 ‘ romance will end, but it hath gone on hitherto most
 ‘ erotically. Such perils and escapes ! Juan’s are as
 ‘ child’s play in comparison. The fools think that all
 ‘ my *poeshie* is always allusive to my *own* adventures :
 ‘ I have had at one time or another better and more
 ‘ extraordinary and perilous and pleasant than these,
 ‘ every day of the week, if I might tell them; but that
 ‘ must never be.

‘ I hope Mrs. M. has accouched.

‘ Yours ever.’

LETTER 337.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ Bologna, August 12th, 1819.

‘ I do not know how far I may be able to reply to
 ‘ your letter, for I am not very well to-day. Last
 ‘ night I went to the representation of Alfieri’s *Mirra*,

‘ the two last acts of which threw me into convulsions.
‘ I do not mean by that word a lady’s hysterics, but the
‘ agony of reluctant tears, and the choking shudder,
‘ which I do not often undergo for fiction. This is but
‘ the second time for anything under reality: the first
‘ was on seeing Kean’s Sir Giles Overreach. The worst
‘ was, that the “Dama” in whose box I was went off
‘ in the same way, I really believe more from fright
‘ than any other sympathy—at least with the players:
‘ but she has been ill, and I have been ill, and we are
‘ all languid and pathetic this morning, with great
‘ expenditure of *sal volatile**. But, to return to your
‘ letter of the 23d of July.

‘ You are right, Gifford is right, Crabbe is right,
‘ Hobhouse is right—you are all right, and I am all
‘ wrong; but do, pray, let me have that pleasure. Cut
‘ me up root and branch; quarter me in the Quarterly;
‘ send round my “*disjecti membra poetæ*,” like those
‘ of the Levite’s concubine; make me, if you will, a
‘ spectacle to men and angels; but don’t ask me to
‘ alter, for I won’t:—I am obstinate and lazy—and
‘ there’s the truth.

* The ‘Dama,’ in whose company he witnessed this representation, thus describes its effect upon him:—‘The play was that of *Mirra*; the actors, and particularly the actress who performed the part of *Mirra*, seconded with much success the intentions of our great dramatist. Lord Byron took a strong interest in the representation, and it was evident that he was deeply affected. At length there came a point of the performance at which he could no longer restrain his emotions;—he burst into a flood of tears, and, his sobs preventing him from remaining any longer in the box, he rose and left the theatre.—I saw him similarly affected another time during a representation of Alfieri’s “*Philip*,” at Ravenna.’—‘*Gli attori, e specialmente l’ attrice che rappresentava Mirra secondava assai bene la mente del nostro grande Tragico. L. B. prece molto interesse alla rappresentazione, e si conosceva she era molto commosso. Venne un punto poi della Tragedia in cui non potè più frenare la sua emozione,—diede in un diretto pianto e i singhiozzi gl’ impedirono di più restare nel palco; onde si levò, e parti dal teatro. In uno stato simile lo viddi un altra volta a Ravenna ad una rappresentazione del Filippo d’Alfieri.*’

‘ But, nevertheless, I will answer your friend P * *,
‘ who objects to the quick succession of fun and gra-
‘ vity, as if in that case the gravity did not (in inten-
‘ tion, at least) heighten the fun. His metaphor is,
‘ that “ we are never scorched and drenched at the
‘ same time.” Blessings on his experience ! Ask him
‘ these questions about “ scorching and drenching.”
‘ Did he never play at cricket, or walk a mile in hot
‘ weather ? Did he never spill a dish of tea over him-
‘ self in handing the cup to his charmer, to the great
‘ shame of his nankeen breeches ? Did he never swim
‘ in the sea at noonday with the sun in his eyes and
‘ on his head, which all the foam of ocean could not
‘ cool ? Did he never draw his foot out of too hot
‘ water, d—ning his eyes and his valet’s ? Did he never
‘ tumble into a river or lake, fishing, and sit in his
‘ wet clothes in the boat, or on the bank, afterwards
‘ “ scorched and drenched,” like a true sportsman ?
‘ “ Oh for breath to utter ! ”—but make him my com-
‘ pliments ; he is a clever fellow for all that—a very
‘ clever fellow.

‘ You ask me for the plan of Donny Johnny : I *have*
‘ no plan ; I *had* no plan ; but I had or have materials ;
‘ though if, like Tony Lumpkin, “ I am to be snubbed
‘ so when I am in spirits,” the poem will be naught,
‘ and the poet turn serious again. If it don’t take, I
‘ will leave it off where it is, with all due respect to
‘ the public ; but if continued, it must be in my own
‘ way. You might as well make Hamlet (or Diggory)
‘ “ act mad ” in a strait waistcoat as trammel my
‘ buffoonery, if I am to be a buffoon ; their gestures
‘ and my thoughts would only be pitiably absurd and
‘ ludicrously constrained. Why, man, the soul of
‘ such writing is its licence ; at least the *liberty* of that

‘ *licence*, if one likes—*not* that one should abuse it. It
‘ is like Trial by Jury and Peerage and the Habeas
‘ Corpus—a very fine thing, but chiefly in the *rever-*
‘ *sion*; because no one wishes to be tried for the mere
‘ pleasure of proving his possession of the privilege.

‘ But a truce with these reflections. You are too
‘ earnest and eager about a work never intended to be
‘ serious. Do you suppose that I could have any in-
‘ tention but to giggle and make giggle?—a playful
‘ satire, with as little poetry as could be helped, was
‘ what I meant. And as to the indecency, do, pray,
‘ read in Boswell what *Johnson*, the sullen moralist,
‘ says of *Prior* and Paulo Purgante.

‘ Will you get a favour done for me? *You* can, by
‘ your government friends, Croker, Canning, or my old
‘ schoolfellow Peel, and I can’t. Here it is. Will
‘ you ask them to appoint (*without salary or emolument*)
‘ a noble Italian (whom I will name afterwards) consul
‘ or vice-consul for Ravenna? He is a man of very
‘ large property,—noble, too; but he wishes to have
‘ a British protection, in case of changes. Ravenna is
‘ near the sea. He wants *no emolument* whatever.
‘ That his office might be useful, I know; as I lately
‘ sent off from Ravenna to Trieste a poor devil of an
‘ English sailor, who had remained there sick, sorry,
‘ and pennyless (having been set ashore in 1814), from
‘ the want of any accredited agent able or willing to
‘ help him homewards. Will you get this done? If
‘ you do, I will then send his name and condition,
‘ subject, of course, to rejection, if *not* approved when
‘ known.

‘ I know that in the Levant you make consuls and
‘ vice-consuls, perpetually, of foreigners. This man is
‘ a patrician, and has twelve thousand a-year. His

‘ motive is a British protection in case of new inva-
‘ sions. Don’t you think Croker would do it for us ?
‘ To be sure, my *interest* is rare!! but perhaps a bro-
‘ ther wit in the Tory line might do a good turn at the
‘ request of so harmless and long absent a Whig, par-
‘ ticularly as there is no *salary* or *burthen* of any sort
‘ to be annexed to the office.

‘ I can assure you, I should look upon it as a great
‘ obligation ; but, alas ! that very circumstance may,
‘ very probably, operate to the contrary—indeed, it
‘ ought ; but I have, at least, been an honest and an
‘ open enemy. Amongst your many splendid govern-
‘ ment connexions, could not you, think you, get our
‘ Bibulus made a Consul ? or make me one, that I may
‘ make him my Vice. You may be assured that, in
‘ case of accidents in Italy, he would be no feeble
‘ adjunct—as you would think, if you knew his patri-
‘ mony.

‘ What is all this about Tom Moore ? but why do I
‘ ask ? since the state of my own affairs would not per-
‘ mit me to be of use to him, though they are greatly
‘ improved since 1816, and may, with some more luck
‘ and a little prudence, become quite clear. It seems
‘ his claimants are *American* merchants ? *There goes*
‘ *Nemesis* ! Moore abused America. It is always
‘ thus in the long run :—Time, the Avenger. You
‘ have seen every trampler down, in turn, from Buona-
‘ parte to the simplest individuals. You saw how
‘ some were avenged even upon my insignificance,
‘ and how in turn * * * paid for his atrocity. It
‘ is an odd world ; but the watch has its mainspring,
‘ after all.

‘ So the Prince has been repealing Lord Edward
‘ Fitzgerald’s forfeiture ? *Ecco un’ sonetto* !

- ‘ To be the father of the fatherless,
- ‘ To stretch the hand from the throne’s height, and raise
- ‘ *His* offspring, who expired in other days
- ‘ To make thy sire’s sway by a kingdom less,—
- ‘ *This* is to be a monarch, and repress
- ‘ Envy into unutterable praise.
- ‘ Dismiss thy guard, and trust thee to such traits,
- ‘ For who would lift a hand, except to bless?
- ‘ Were it not easy, Sir, and is’t not sweet
- ‘ To make thyself beloved? and to be
- ‘ Omnipotent by Mercy’s means? for thus
- ‘ Thy sovereignty would grow but more complete,
- ‘ A despot thou, and yet thy people free,
- ‘ And by the heart, not hand, enslaving us.

‘ There, you dogs! there’s a sonnet for you: you
 ‘ won’t have such as that in a hurry from Mr. Fitz-
 ‘ gerald. You may publish it with my name, an’ ye
 ‘ wool. He deserves all praise, bad and good; it was
 ‘ a very noble piece of principality. Would you like
 ‘ an epigram—a translation?

- ‘ If for silver, or for gold,
- ‘ You could melt ten thousand pimples
- ‘ Into half a dozen dimples,
- ‘ Then your face we might behold,
- ‘ Looking, doubtless, much more snugly,
- ‘ Yet ev’n *then* ’twould be d—d ugly.

‘ This was written on some Frenchwoman, by Rul-
 ‘ hieres, I believe. ‘ Yours.’

LETTER 338.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Bologna, August 23d, 1819.*

‘ I send you a letter to R * *ts, signed “Wortley
 ‘ Clutterbuck,” which you may publish in what form you
 ‘ please, in answer to his article. I have had many
 ‘ proofs of men’s absurdity, but he beats all in folly.
 ‘ Why, the wolf in sheep’s clothing has tumbled into
 ‘ the very trap! We’ll strip him. The letter is writ-
 ‘ ten in great haste, and amidst a thousand vexations.
 ‘ Your letter only came yesterday, so that there is no

‘ time to polish : the post goes out to-morrow. The
 ‘ date is “ Little Piddington.” Let **** correct the
 ‘ press : he knows and can read the handwriting.
 ‘ Continue to keep the *anonymous* about “ Juan ;” it
 ‘ helps us to fight against overwhelming numbers. I
 ‘ have a thousand distractions at present ; so excuse
 ‘ haste, and wonder I can act or write at all. Answer
 ‘ by post, as usual. ‘ Yours.

‘ P.S. If I had had time, and been quieter and
 ‘ nearer, I would have cut him to hash ; but as it is,
 ‘ you can judge for yourselves.’

The letter to the Reviewer, here mentioned, had its origin in rather an amusing circumstance. In the First Canto of Don Juan appeared the following passage.

‘ For fear some prudish readers should grow skittish,
 ‘ I’ve bribed My Grandmother’s Review,—the British!
 ‘ I sent it in a letter to the editor,
 ‘ Who thank’d me duly by return of post—
 ‘ I’m for a handsome article his creditor ;
 ‘ Yet if my gentle Muse he please to roast,
 ‘ And break a promise after having made it her,
 ‘ Denying the receipt of what it cost,
 ‘ And smear his page with gall instead of honey,
 ‘ All I can say is—that he had the money.’

On the appearance of the Poem, the learned editor of the Review in question allowed himself to be decoyed into the ineffable absurdity of taking the charge as serious, and, in his succeeding number, came forth with an indignant contradiction of it. To this tempting subject the letter, written so hastily off at Bologna, related ; but, though printed for Mr. Murray, in a pamphlet consisting of twenty-three pages, it was never published by him*. Being valuable, however,

* It appeared afterwards in the Liberal.

as one of the best specimens we have of Lord Byron's simple and thoroughly English prose, I shall here preserve some extracts from it.

‘ TO THE EDITOR OF THE BRITISH REVIEW.

‘ My dear R——ts,

‘ As a believer in the Church of England—to say
‘ nothing of the State—I have been an occasional
‘ reader, and great admirer, though not a subscriber
‘ to your Review. But I do not know that any article
‘ of its contents ever gave me much surprise till the
‘ eleventh of your late twenty-seventh number made
‘ its appearance. You have there most manfully re-
‘ futed a calumnious accusation of bribery and corrup-
‘ tion, the credence of which in the public mind might
‘ not only have damaged your reputation as a clergyman
‘ and an editor, but, what would have been still worse,
‘ have injured the circulation of your journal ; which,
‘ I regret to hear, is not so extensive as the “ purity
‘ (as you well observe) of its, &c. &c.” and the present
‘ taste for propriety, would induce us to expect. The
‘ charge itself is of a solemn nature, and, although
‘ in verse, is couched in terms of such circumstantial
‘ gravity as to induce a belief little short of that gene-
‘ rally accorded to the thirty-nine articles, to which
‘ you so generously subscribed on taking your degrees.
‘ It is a charge the most revolting to the heart of man
‘ from its frequent occurrence ; to the mind of a states-
‘ man from its occasional truth ; and to the soul of an
‘ editor from its moral impossibility. You are charged
‘ then in the last line of one octave stanza, and the
‘ whole eight lines of the next, viz. 209th and 210th
‘ of the First Canto of that “ pestilent poem,” Don
‘ Juan, with receiving, and still more foolishly acknow-

‘ ledging, the receipt of certain monies to eulogize the
‘ unknown author, who by this account must be known
‘ to you, if to nobody else. An impeachment of this
‘ nature, so seriously made, there is but one way of
‘ refuting ; and it is my firm persuasion, that whether
‘ you did or did not (and *I* believe that you did not)
‘ receive the said moneys, of which I wish that he had
‘ specified the sum, you are quite right in denying all
‘ knowledge of the transaction. If charges of this
‘ nefarious description are to go forth, sanctioned by
‘ all the solemnity of circumstance, and guaranteed
‘ by the veracity of verse (as Counsellor Phillips would
‘ say), what is to become of readers hitherto implicitly
‘ confident in the not less veracious prose of our critical
‘ journals? what is to become of the reviews ; and, if
‘ the reviews fail, what is to become of the editors? It
‘ is common cause, and you have done well to sound
‘ the alarm. I myself, in my humble sphere, will be
‘ one of your echoes. In the words of the tragedian
‘ Liston, “ I love a row,” and you seem justly deter-
‘ mined to make one.

‘ It is barely possible, certainly improbable, that the
‘ writer might have been in jest ; but this only aggra-
‘ vates his crime. A joke, the proverb says, “ breaks
‘ no bones ;” but it may break a bookseller, or it may
‘ be the cause of bones being broken. The jest is
‘ but a bad one at the best for the author, and might
‘ have been a still worse one for you, if your copious
‘ contradiction did not certify to all whom it may con-
‘ cern your own indignant innocence, and the immacu-
‘ late purity of the *British Review*. I do not doubt
‘ your word, my dear R——ts, yet I cannot help wish-
‘ ing that, in a case of such vital importance, it had
‘ assumed the more substantial shape of an affidavit

‘ sworn before the Lord Mayor Atkins, who readily
‘ receives any deposition; and doubtless would have
‘ brought it in some way as evidence of the designs of
‘ the Reformers to set fire to London, at the same time
‘ that he himself meditates the same good office to-
‘ wards the river Thames.

‘ I recollect hearing, soon after the publication, this
‘ subject discussed at the tea-table of Mr. * * * the
‘ poet,—and Mrs. and the Misses * * * * * being in a
‘ corner of the room perusing the proof sheets of Mr.
‘ * * *’s poems, the male part of the *conversazione*
‘ were at liberty to make some observations on the
‘ poem and passage in question, and there was a dif-
‘ ference of opinion. Some thought the allusion was
‘ to the “British Critic;” others, that by the expres-
‘ sion, “My Grandmother’s Review,” it was intimated
‘ that “my grandmother” was not the reader of the
‘ review, but actually the writer; thereby insinuating,
‘ my dear Mr. R——ts, that you were an old woman;
‘ because, as people often say, “Jeffrey’s Review,”
‘ “Gifford’s Review,” in lieu of Edinburgh and Quar-
‘ terly, so “My Grandmother’s Review” and R——ts’s
‘ might be also synonymous. Now, whatever colour
‘ this insinuation might derive from the circumstance
‘ of your wearing a gown, as well as from your time of
‘ life, your general style, and various passages of your
‘ writings,—I will take upon myself to exculpate you
‘ from all suspicion of the kind, and assert, without
‘ calling Mrs. R——ts in testimony, that if ever you
‘ should be chosen Pope, you will pass through all the
‘ previous ceremonies with as much credit as any pon-
‘ tiff since the parturition of Joan. It is very unfair
‘ to judge of sex from writings, particularly from those
‘ of the British Review. We are all liable to be de-

‘ ceived, and it is an indisputable fact that many of
‘ the best articles in your journal, which were attri-
‘ buted to a veteran female, were actually written by
‘ you yourself, and yet to this day there are people
‘ who could never find out the difference. But let us
‘ return to the more immediate question.

‘ I agree with you that it is impossible Lord B. should
‘ be the author, not only because, as a British peer
‘ and a British poet, it would be impracticable for
‘ him to have recourse to such facetious fiction, but
‘ for some other reasons which you have omitted to
‘ state. In the first place, his lordship has no grand-
‘ mother. Now the author—and we may believe him
‘ in this—doth expressly state that the “British” is
‘ his “Grandmother’s Review;” and if, as I think I
‘ have distinctly proved, this was not a mere figura-
‘ tive allusion to your supposed intellectual age and
‘ sex, my dear friend, it follows, whether you be
‘ she or no, that there is such an elderly lady still
‘ extant.

‘ Shall I give you what I think a prudent opinion ?
‘ I don’t mean to insinuate, God forbid ! but if, by any
‘ accident, there should have been such a correspon-
‘ dence between you and the unknown author, who-
‘ ever he may be, send him back his money ; I dare
‘ say he will be very glad to have it again ; it can’t be
‘ much, considering the value of the article and the
‘ circulation of the journal ; and you are too modest to
‘ rate your praise beyond its real worth :—don’t be
‘ angry, I know you won’t, at this appraisement of
‘ your powers of eulogy ; for on the other hand, my
‘ dear fellow, depend upon it your abuse is worth, not
‘ its own weight, that’s a feather, but *your* weight in
‘ gold. So don’t spare it ; if he has bargained for

‘ *that*, give it handsomely, and depend upon your doing
‘ him a friendly office.

‘ What the motives of this writer may have been
‘ for (as you magnificently translate his quizzing you)
‘ “stating, with the particularity which belongs to fact,
‘ the forgery of a groundless fiction,” (do, pray, my
‘ dear R., talk a little less “in King Cambyzes’ vein”)
‘ I cannot pretend to say; perhaps to laugh at you,
‘ but that is no reason for your benevolently making
‘ all the world laugh also. I approve of your being
‘ angry, I tell you I am angry too, but you should not
‘ have shown it so outrageously. Your solemn “*if*
‘ somebody personating the Editor of the, &c, &c. has
‘ received from Lord B. or from any other person,”
‘ reminds me of Charley Incledon’s usual exordium
‘ when people came into the tavern to hear him sing
‘ without paying their share of the reckoning—“if a
‘ maun, or *ony* maun, or *ony other* maun,” &c. &c.;
‘ you have both the same redundant eloquence. But
‘ why should you think anybody would personate you?
‘ Nobody would dream of such a prank who ever read
‘ your compositions, and perhaps not many who have
‘ heard your conversation. But I have been inocu-
‘ lated with a little of your prolixity. The fact is, my
‘ dear R——ts, that somebody has tried to make a
‘ fool of you, and what he did not succeed in doing,
‘ you have done for him and for yourself.’

Towards the latter end of August, Count Guiccioli, accompanied by his lady, went for a short time to visit some of his Romagnese estates, while Lord Byron remained at Bologna alone. And here, with a heart softened and excited by the new feeling that had taken possession of him, he appears to have given himself

up, during this interval of solitude, to a train of melancholy and impassioned thought such as, for a time, brought back all the romance of his youthful days. That spring of natural tenderness within his soul, which neither the world's efforts nor his own had been able to chill or choke up, was now, with something of its first freshness, set flowing once more. He again knew what it was to love and be loved,—too late, it is true, for happiness, and too wrongly for peace, but with devotion enough, on the part of the woman, to satisfy even his thirst for affection, and with a sad earnestness, on his own, a foreboding fidelity, which made him cling but the more passionately to this attachment from feeling that it would be his last.

A circumstance which he himself used to mention as having occurred at this period will show how overpowering, at times, was the rush of melancholy over his heart. It was his fancy, during Madame Guiccioli's absence from Bologna, to go daily to her house at his usual hour of visiting her, and there, causing her apartments to be opened, to sit turning over her books, and writing in them*. He would then descend into her garden, where he passed hours in musing; and it was on an occasion of this kind, as he stood looking, in a state of unconscious reverie, into one of those fountains so common in the gardens of Italy, that there came suddenly into his mind such desolate

* One of these notes, written at the end of the 5th chapter, 18th book of *Corinne* ('*Fragmens des Pensées de Corinne*') is as follows:—

' I knew Madame de Staël well,—better than she knew Italy,—but I little thought that, one day, I should *think with her thoughts*, in the country where she has laid the scene of her most attractive productions. She is sometimes right, and often wrong, about Italy and England; but almost always true in delineating the heart, which is of but one nation, and of no country,—or, rather, of all.

' BYRON.

' *Bologna, August 23, 1819.*'

fancies, such bodings of the misery he might bring on her he loved, by that doom which (as he has himself written) ‘makes it fatal to be loved*,’ that, overwhelmed with his own thoughts, he burst into an agony of tears.

During the same few days it was that he wrote in the last page of Madame Guiccioli’s copy of ‘Corinne’ the following remarkable note:—

‘ My dearest Teresa,—I have read this book in
 ‘ your garden ;—my love, you were absent, or else I
 ‘ could not have read it. It is a favourite book of
 ‘ yours, and the writer was a friend of mine. You will
 ‘ not understand these English words, and *others* will
 ‘ not understand them,—which is the reason I have not
 ‘ scrawled them in Italian. But you will recognize
 ‘ the handwriting of him who passionately loved you,
 ‘ and you will divine that, over a book which was
 ‘ yours, he could only think of love. In that word,
 ‘ beautiful in all languages, but most so in yours—
 ‘ *Amor mio*—is comprised my existence here and here-
 ‘ after. I feel I exist here, and I fear that I shall exist
 ‘ hereafter,—to *what* purpose you will decide; my des-
 ‘ tiny rests with you, and you are a woman, eighteen
 ‘ years of age, and two out of a convent. I wish that
 ‘ you had stayed there, with all my heart,—or, at least,
 ‘ that I had never met you in your married state.

‘ But all this is too late. I love you, and you love

- * ‘ Oh Love! what is it, in this world of ours,
 ‘ Which makes it fatal to be loved? ah, why
 ‘ With cypress branches hast thou wreath’d thy bowers,
 ‘ And made thy best interpreter a sigh?
 ‘ As those who dote on odours pluck the flowers,
 ‘ And place them on their breasts—but place to die—
 ‘ Thus the frail beings we would fondly cherish
 ‘ Are laid within our bosoms but to perish.’

‘ me,—at least, you *say so*, and *act* as if you *did* so,
 ‘ which last is a great consolation in all events. But
 ‘ *I* more than love you, and cannot cease to love
 ‘ you.

‘ Think of me, sometimes, when the Alps and the
 ‘ ocean divide us,—but they never will, unless you
 ‘ *wish* it.

‘ BYRON.

‘ *Bologna, August 25th, 1819.*’

LETTER 339.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Bologna, August 24th, 1819.*

‘ I wrote to you by last post, enclosing a buffoon-
 ‘ ing letter for publication, addressed to the buffoon
 ‘ R——ts, who has thought proper to tie a canister to
 ‘ his own tail. It was written off-hand, and in the
 ‘ midst of circumstances not very favourable to face-
 ‘ tiousness, so that there may, perhaps, be more bitter-
 ‘ ness than enough for that sort of small acid punch :—
 ‘ you will tell me.

‘ Keep the *anonymous*, in any case : it helps what
 ‘ fun there may be. But if the matter grow serious
 ‘ about *Don Juan*, and you feel *yourself* in a scrape,
 ‘ or *me* either, *own that I am the author*. I will never
 ‘ *shrink* ; and if *you* do, I can always answer you in
 ‘ the question of Guatimozin to his minister—each
 ‘ being on his own coals*.

‘ I wish that I had been in better spirits ; but I am
 ‘ out of sorts, out of nerves, and now and then (I begin
 ‘ to fear) out of my senses. All this Italy has done for
 ‘ me, and not England : I defy all you, and your cli-
 ‘ mate to boot, to make me mad. But if ever I do
 ‘ really become a bedlamite, and wear a strait waist-
 ‘ coat, let me be brought back among you ; your people
 ‘ will then be proper company.

* “ Am I now reposing on a bed of flowers ? ”—See ROBERTSON.

‘ I assure you what I here say and feel has nothing
‘ to do with England, either in a literary or personal
‘ point of view. All my present pleasures or plagues
‘ are as Italian as the opera. And after all, they are
‘ but trifles; for all this arises from my “Dama’s”
‘ being in the country for three days (at Capo-fiume).
‘ But as I could never live but for one human being at
‘ a time, (and, I assure you, *that one* has never been
‘ *myself*, as you may know by the consequences, for
‘ the *selfish* are *successful* in life,) I feel alone and
‘ unhappy.

‘ I have sent for my daughter from Venice, and I
‘ ride daily, and walk in a garden, under a purple
‘ canopy of grapes, and sit by a fountain, and talk with
‘ the gardener of his tools, which seem greater than
‘ Adam’s, and with his wife, and with his son’s wife,
‘ who is the youngest of the party, and, I think, talks
‘ best of the three. Then I revisit the Campo Santo,
‘ and my old friend, the sexton, has two—but *one* the
‘ prettiest daughter imaginable; and I amuse myself
‘ with contrasting her beautiful and innocent face of
‘ fifteen with the skulls with which he has peopled
‘ several cells, and particularly with that of one skull
‘ dated 1766, which was once covered (the tradition
‘ goes) by the most lovely features of Bologna—noble
‘ and rich. When I look at these, and at this girl—
‘ when I think of what *they were*, and what she must
‘ be—why, then, my dear Murray, I won’t shock you
‘ by saying what I think. It is little matter what
‘ becomes of us “bearded men,” but I don’t like the
‘ notion of a beautiful woman’s lasting less than a
‘ beautiful tree—than her own picture—her own
‘ shadow, which won’t change so to the sun as her
‘ face to the mirror. I must leave off, for my head

‘ aches consumedly. I have never been quite well
‘ since the night of the representation of Alfieri’s
‘ Mirra, a fortnight ago. ‘ Yours ever.’

LETTER 340.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Bologna, August 29th, 1819.*

‘ I have been in a rage these two days, and am
‘ still bilious therefrom. You shall hear. A captain
‘ of dragoons, * *, Hanoverian by birth, in the Papal
‘ troops at present, whom I had obliged by a loan when
‘ nobody would lend him a paul, recommended a horse
‘ to me, on sale by a Lieutenant * *, an officer who
‘ unites the sale of cattle to the purchase of men. I
‘ bought it. The next day, on shoeing the horse, we
‘ discovered the *thrush*,—the animal being warranted
‘ sound. I sent to reclaim the contract and the money.
‘ The lieutenant desired to speak with me in person.
‘ I consented. He came. It was his own particular
‘ request. He began a story. I asked him if he would
‘ return the money. He said no—but he would ex-
‘ change. He asked an exorbitant price for his other
‘ horses. I told him that he was a thief. He said he
‘ was an *officer* and a man of honour, and pulled out a
‘ Parmesan passport signed by General Count Neifperg.
‘ I answered, that as he was an officer, I would treat
‘ him as such ; and that as to his being a gentleman,
‘ he might prove it by returning the money : as for his
‘ Parmesan passport, I should have valued it more if
‘ it had been a Parmesan cheese. He answered in
‘ high terms, and said that if it were the *morning* (it
‘ was about eight o’clock in the evening) he would
‘ have *satisfaction*. I then lost my temper : “ As for
‘ THAT,” I replied, “ you shall have it directly,—it
‘ will be *mutual* satisfaction, I can assure you. You

‘ are a thief, and, as you say, an officer ; my pistols
‘ are in the next room loaded ; take one of the candles,
‘ examine, and make your choice of weapons.” He
‘ replied that *pistols* were *English weapons* ; *he* always
‘ fought with the *sword*. I told him that I was able
‘ to accommodate him, having three regimental swords
‘ in a drawer near us ; and he might take the longest
‘ and put himself on guard.

‘ All this passed in presence of a third person. He
‘ then said *No*, but to-morrow morning he would give
‘ me the meeting at any time or place. I answered
‘ that it was not usual to appoint meetings in the pre-
‘ sence of witnesses, and that we had best speak man
‘ to man, and appoint time and instruments. But as
‘ the man present was leaving the room, the Lieute-
‘ nant * *, before he could shut the door after him, ran
‘ out roaring “ help and murder ” most lustily, and fell
‘ into a sort of hysteric in the arms of about fifty
‘ people, who all saw that I had no weapon of any sort
‘ or kind about me, and followed him, asking him what
‘ the devil was the matter with him. Nothing would
‘ do : he ran away without his hat, and went to bed,
‘ ill of the fright. He then tried his complaint at the
‘ police, which dismissed it as frivolous. He is, I
‘ believe, gone away, or going.

‘ The horse was warranted, but, I believe, so worded
‘ that the villain will not be obliged to refund, accord-
‘ ing to law. He endeavoured to raise up an indict-
‘ ment of assault and battery, but as it was in a public
‘ inn, in a frequented street, there were too many wit-
‘ nesses to the contrary ; and, as a military man, he
‘ has not cut a martial figure, even in the opinion of
‘ the priests. He ran off in such a hurry that he left
‘ his hat, and never missed it till he got to his hostel

‘ or inn. The facts are as I tell you, I can assure you.
‘ He began by “ coming Captain Grand over me,” or
‘ I should never have thought of trying his “ cunning
‘ in fence.” But what could I do? He talked of
‘ “ honour, and satisfaction, and his commission;” he
‘ produced a military passport; there are severe punish-
‘ ments for *regular duels* on the continent, and trifling
‘ ones for *rencontres*, so that it is best to fight it out
‘ directly; he had robbed, and then wanted to insult
‘ me;—what could I do? My patience was gone, and
‘ the weapons at hand, fair and equal. Besides, it
‘ was just after dinner, when my digestion was bad,
‘ and I don’t like to be disturbed. His friend * * is
‘ at Forli; we shall meet on my way back to Ravenna.
‘ The Hanoverian seems the greater rogue of the two;
‘ and if my valour does not ooze away like Acres’s—
‘ “ Odds flints and triggers!” if it should be a rainy
‘ morning, and my stomach in disorder, there may be
‘ something for the obituary.

‘ Now pray, “ Sir Lucius, do not you look upon me
‘ as a very ill-used gentleman?” I send my Lieutenant
‘ to match Mr. Hobhouse’s Major Cartwright: and so
‘ “ good morrow to you, good master Lieutenant.”
‘ With regard to other things, I will write soon, but I
‘ have been quarrelling and fooling till I can scribble
‘ no more.’

In the month of September, Count Guiccioli, being called away by business to Ravenna, left his young Countess and her lover to the free enjoyment of each other’s society at Bologna. The lady’s ill health, which had been the cause of her thus remaining behind, was thought soon after to require the still further advantage of a removal to Venice, and the Count her husband,

being written to on the subject, consented, with the most complaisant readiness, that she should proceed thither in company with Lord Byron. ‘ Some business’ (says the lady’s own Memoir) ‘ having called Count Guiccioli to Ravenna, I was obliged by the state of my health, instead of accompanying him, to return to Venice, and he consented that Lord Byron should be the companion of my journey. We left Bologna on the fifteenth of September: we visited the Euganean Hills and Arquà, and wrote our names in the book which is presented to those who make this pilgrimage. But I cannot linger over these recollections of happiness;—the contrast with the present is too dreadful. If a blessed spirit, while in the full enjoyment of heavenly happiness, were sent down to this earth to suffer all its miseries, the contrast could not be more dreadful between the past and the present, than what I have endured from the moment when that terrible word reached my ears, and I for ever lost the hope of again beholding him, one look from whom I valued beyond earth’s all happiness. When I arrived at Venice, the physicians ordered that I should try the country air, and Lord Byron, having a villa at La Mira, gave it up to me, and came to reside there with me. At this place we passed the autumn, and there I had the pleasure of forming your acquaintance*.’

* ‘ Il Conte Guiccioli doveva per affari ritornare a Ravenna; lo stato della mia salute esiggeva che io ritornassi in vece a Venezia. Egli acconsenti dunque che Lord Byron, mi fosse compagno di viaggio. Partimmo da Bologna alli 15 di Set.—visitammo insieme i Colli Euganei ed Arquà; scrivemmo i nostri nomi nel libro che si presenta a quelli che fanno quel pellegrinaggio. Ma sopra tali rimembranze di felicità non posso fermarmi, caro Signr. Moore; l’opposizione col presente é troppo forte, e se un anima benedetta nel pieno godimento di tutte le felicità celesti fosse mandata quaggiù e condannata a sopportare tutte

It was my good fortune, at this period, in the course of a short and hasty tour through the north of Italy, to pass five or six days with Lord Byron at Venice. I had written to him on my way thither to announce my coming, and to say how happy it would make me could I tempt him to accompany me as far as Rome.

During my stay at Geneva, an opportunity had been afforded me of observing the exceeding readiness with which even persons the least disposed to be prejudiced gave an ear to any story relating to Lord Byron, in which the proper portions of odium and romance were but plausibly mingled. In the course of conversation, one day, with the late amiable and enlightened Monsieur D * *, that gentleman related, with much feeling, to my fellow-traveller and myself, the details of a late act of seduction of which Lord Byron had, he said, been guilty, and which was made to comprise within itself all the worst features of such unmanly frauds upon innocence ;—the victim, a young unmarried lady, of one of the first families of Venice, whom the noble seducer had lured from her father's house to his own, and, after a few weeks, most inhumanly turned her out of doors. In vain, said the relator, did she entreat to become his servant, his slave ;—in vain did she ask to remain in some dark corner of his mansion, from which she might be able to catch a glimpse of his form as he passed. Her betrayer was obdurate,

‘ le miserie della nostra terra non potrebbe sentire più terribile contrasto
 ‘ frà il passato ed il presente di quello che io sento dacchè quella terri-
 ‘ bile parola è giunta alle mie orecchie, dacchè ho perduto la speranza di
 ‘ più vedere quello di cui uno sguardo valeva per me più di tutte le fe-
 ‘ licità della terra. Giunti a Venezia i medici mi ordinarono di respirare
 ‘ l'aria della campagna. Egli aveva una villa alla Mira,—la cedesse a
 ‘ me, e venne meco. Là passammo l'autunno, e là ebbi il bene di fare la
 ‘ vostra conoscenza.’—*MS.*

and the unfortunate young lady, in despair at being thus abandoned by him, threw herself into the canal, from which she was taken out but to be consigned to a mad-house. Though convinced that there must be considerable exaggeration in this story, it was only on my arrival at Venice I ascertained that the whole was a romance; and that out of the circumstances (already laid before the reader) connected with Lord Byron's fantastic and, it must be owned, discreditable fancy for the Fornarina, this pathetic tale, so implicitly believed at Geneva, was fabricated.

Having parted, at Milan, with Lord John Russell, whom I had accompanied from England, and whom I was to rejoin, after a short visit to Rome, at Genoa, I made purchase of a small and (as it soon proved) crazy travelling carriage, and proceeded alone on my way to Venice. My time being limited, I stopped no longer at the intervening places than was sufficient to hurry over their respective wonders, and, leaving Padua at noon on the 8th of October, I found myself, about two o'clock, at the door of my friend's villa, at La Mira. He was but just up, and in his bath; but the servant having announced my arrival, he returned a message that, if I would wait till he was dressed, he would accompany me to Venice. The interval I employed in conversing with my old acquaintance, Fletcher, and in viewing, under his guidance, some of the apartments of the villa.

It was not long before Lord Byron himself made his appearance, and the delight I felt in meeting him once more, after a separation of so many years, was not a little heightened by observing that his pleasure was, to the full, as great, while it was rendered doubly touching by the evident rarity of such meetings to him of late,

and the frank outbreak of cordiality and gaiety with which he gave way to his feelings. It would be impossible, indeed, to convey to those who have not, at some time or other, felt the charm of his manner, any idea of what it could be when under the influence of such pleasurable excitement as it was most flatteringly evident he experienced at this moment.

I was a good deal struck, however, by the alteration that had taken place in his personal appearance. He had grown fatter both in person and face, and the latter had most suffered by the change,—having lost, by the enlargement of the features, some of that refined and spiritualized look that had, in other times, distinguished it. The addition of whiskers, too, which he had not long before been induced to adopt, from hearing that some one had said he had a ‘*faccia di musico*,’ as well as the length to which his hair grew down on his neck, and the rather foreign air of his coat and cap,—all combined to produce that dissimilarity to his former self I had observed in him. He was still, however, eminently handsome; and, in exchange for whatever his features might have lost of their high, romantic character, they had become more fitted for the expression of that arch, waggish wisdom, that Epicurean play of humour, which he had shown to be equally inherent in his various and prodigally gifted nature; while, by the somewhat increased roundness of the contours, the resemblance of his finely-formed mouth and chin to those of the Belvedere Apollo had become still more striking.

His breakfast, which I found he rarely took before three or four o’clock in the afternoon, was speedily despatched,—his habit being to eat it standing, and

the meal in general consisting of one or two raw eggs, a cup of tea without either milk or sugar, and a bit of dry biscuit. Before we took our departure, he presented me to the Countess Guiccioli, who was at this time, as my readers already know, living under the same roof with him at La Mira; and who, with a style of beauty singular in an Italian, as being fair-complexioned and delicate, left an impression upon my mind, during this our first short interview, of intelligence and amiableness such as all that I have since known or heard of her has but served to confirm.

We now started together, Lord Byron and myself, in my little Milanese vehicle, for Fusina,—his portly gondolier Tita, in a rich livery and most redundant mustachios, having seated himself on the front of the carriage, to the no small trial of its strength, which had already once given way, even under my own weight, between Verona and Vicenza. On our arrival at Fusina, my noble friend, from his familiarity with all the details of the place, had it in his power to save me both trouble and expense in the different arrangements relative to the custom-house, remise, &c.; and the good-natured assiduity with which he bustled about in despatching these matters, gave me an opportunity of observing, in his use of the infirm limb, a much greater degree of activity than I had ever before, except in sparring, witnessed.

As we proceeded across the Lagoon in his gondola, the sun was just setting, and it was an evening such as Romance would have chosen for a first sight of Venice, rising ‘with her tiara of bright towers’ above the wave; while, to complete, as might be imagined, the solemn interest of the scene, I beheld it in company

with him who had lately given a new life to its glories, and sung of that fair City of the Sea thus grandly:

‘ I stood in Venice on the Bridge of Sighs ;
‘ A palace and a prison on each hand :
‘ I saw from out the wave her structures rise
‘ As from the stroke of the enchanter’s wand :
‘ A thousand years their cloudy wings expand
‘ Around me, and a dying glory smiles
‘ O’er the far times, when many a subject land
‘ Look’d to the winged lion’s marble piles,
‘ Where Venice sat in state, throned in her hundred isles.’

But, whatever emotions the first sight of such a scene might, under other circumstances, have inspired me with, the mood of mind in which I now viewed it was altogether the very reverse of what might have been expected. The exuberant gaiety of my companion, and the recollections,—anything but romantic,—into which our conversation wandered, put at once completely to flight all poetical and historical associations ; and our course was, I am almost ashamed to say, one of uninterrupted merriment and laughter till we found ourselves at the steps of my friend’s palazzo on the Grand Canal. All that had ever happened, of gay or ridiculous, during our London life together,—his scrapes and my lecturings,—our joint adventures with the Bores and Blues, the two great enemies, as he always called them, of London happiness,—our joyous nights together at Watier’s, Kinnaird’s, &c. and ‘ that d—d supper of Rancliffe’s which *ought* to have been a dinner,’—all was passed rapidly in review between us, and with a flow of humour and hilarity, on his side, of which it would have been difficult, even for persons far graver than I can pretend to be, not to have caught the contagion.

He had all along expressed his determination that I should not go to any hotel, but fix my quarters at his

house during the period of my stay ; and, had he been residing there himself, such an arrangement would have been all that I most desired. But, this not being the case, a common hotel was, I thought, a far readier resource ; and I therefore entreated that he would allow me to order an apartment at the Gran Bretagna, which had the reputation, I understood, of being a comfortable hotel. This, however, he would not hear of ; and, as an inducement for me to agree to his plan, said that, as long as I chose to stay, though he should be obliged to return to La Mira in the evenings, he would make it a point to come to Venice every day and dine with me. As we now turned into the dismal canal, and stopped before his damp-looking mansion, my predilection for the Gran Bretagna returned in full force ; and I again ventured to hint that it would save an abundance of trouble to let me proceed thither. But ‘ No—no,’ he answered,—‘ I see you think you’ll ‘ be very uncomfortable here ; but you’ll find that it is ‘ not quite so bad as you expect.’

As I groped my way after him through the dark hall, he cried out, ‘ Keep clear of the dog ;’ and before we had proceeded many paces farther, ‘ Take care, or that monkey will fly at you ;’—a curious proof, among many others, of his fidelity to all the tastes of his youth, as it agrees perfectly with the description of his life at Newstead, in 1809, and of the sort of menagerie which his visitors had then to encounter in their progress through his hall. Having escaped these dangers, I followed him up the staircase to the apartment destined for me. All this time he had been despatching servants in various directions,—one, to procure me a *laquais de place* ; another to go in quest of Mr. Alexander Scott, to whom he wished to give

me in charge; while a third was sent to order his Segretario to come to him. 'So, then, you keep a Secretary?' I said. 'Yes,' he answered, 'a fellow who *'can't write'**—but such are the names these pompous 'people give to things.'

When we had reached the door of the apartment it was discovered to be locked, and, to all appearance, had been so for some time, as the key could not be found;—a circumstance which, to my English apprehension, naturally connected itself with notions of damp and desolation, and I again sighed inwardly for the Gran Bretagna. Impatient at the delay of the key, my noble host, with one of his humorous maledictions, gave a vigorous kick to the door and burst it open; on which we at once entered into an apartment not only spacious and elegant, but wearing an aspect of comfort and habitableness which to a traveller's eye is as welcome as it is rare. 'Here,' he said, in a voice whose every tone spoke kindness and hospitality,— 'these are the rooms I use myself, and here I mean to 'establish you.'

He had ordered dinner from some Tratteria, and while waiting its arrival—as well as that of Mr. Alexander Scott, whom he had invited to join us—we stood out on the balcony, in order that, before the daylight was quite gone, I might have some glimpses of the scene which the Canal presented. Happening to remark, in looking up at the clouds, which were still bright in the west, that 'what had struck me in Italian sunsets was that peculiar rosy hue——' I had hardly pronounced the word 'rosy,' when Lord Byron, clapping his hand on my mouth, said, with a laugh,

* The title of Segretario is sometimes given, as in this case, to a head-servant or house-steward.

‘Come, d—n it, Tom, *don't* be poetical.’ Among the few gondolas passing at the time, there was one at some distance, in which sat two gentlemen, who had the appearance of being English; and, observing them to look our way, Lord Byron, putting his arms a-kimbo, said with a sort of comic swagger, ‘Ah, if you, John Bulls, knew who the two fellows are, now standing up here, I think you *would* stare!’—I risk mentioning these things, though aware how they may be turned against myself, for the sake of the otherwise indescribable traits of manner and character which they convey. After a very agreeable dinner, through which the jest, the story, and the laugh were almost uninterruptedly carried on, our noble host took leave of us to return to La Mira, while Mr. Scott and I went to one of the theatres, to see the *Ottavia* of Alfieri.

The ensuing evenings, during my stay, were passed much in the same manner,—my mornings being devoted, under the kind superintendence of Mr. Scott, to a hasty, and, I fear, unprofitable view of the treasures of art with which Venice abounds. On the subjects of painting and sculpture Lord Byron has, in several of his letters, expressed strongly and, as to most persons will appear, heretically his opinions. In his want, however, of a due appreciation of these arts, he but resembled some of his great precursors in the field of poetry;—both Tasso and Milton, for example, having evinced so little tendency to such tastes*, that,

* That this was the case with Milton is acknowledged by Richardson, who admired both Milton and the Arts too warmly to make such an admission upon any but valid grounds. ‘He does not appear,’ says this writer, ‘to have much regarded what was done with the pencil; no, not even when in Italy, in Rome, in the Vatican. Neither does it seem Sculpture was much esteemed by him.’ After an authority like this, the theories of Hayley and others, with respect to the impressions left upon Milton’s mind by the works of art he had seen in Italy, are hardly worth a thought.

Though it may be conceded that Dante was an admirer of the arts, his

throughout the whole of their pages, there is not, I fear, one single allusion to any of those great masters of the pencil and chisel, whose works, nevertheless, both had seen. That Lord Byron, though despising the imposture and jargon with which the worship of the Arts is, like other worships, clogged and mystified, felt deeply, more especially in sculpture, whatever imaged forth true grace and energy, appears from passages of his poetry which are in everybody's memory, and not a line of which but thrills alive with a sense of grandeur and beauty such as it never entered into the capacity of a mere connoisseur even to conceive.

In reference to this subject, as we were conversing one day after dinner about the various collections I had visited that morning, on my saying that fearful as I was, at all times, of praising any picture, lest I should draw upon myself the connoisseur's sneer for my pains, I would yet, to *him*, venture to own that I had seen a picture at Milan which——'The Hagar!' he exclaimed, eagerly interrupting me; and it was in fact this very picture I was about to mention as having wakened in me, by the truth of its expression, more real emotion than any I had yet seen among the chefs-d'œuvre of Venice. It was with no small degree of pride and pleasure I now discovered that my noble friend had felt equally with myself the affecting mixture of sorrow and reproach with which the woman's eyes tell the whole story in that picture.

On the second evening of my stay, Lord Byron having, as before, left us for La Mira, I most willingly accepted the offer of Mr. Scott to introduce me to the conversazioni of the two celebrated ladies, with whose

recommendation of the Apocalypse to Giotto, as a source of subjects for the pencil, shows, at least, what indifferent judges poets are, in general, of the sort of fancies fittest to be embodied by the painter.

names, as leaders of Venetian fashion, the tourists to Italy have made everybody acquainted. To the Countess A * * 's parties Lord Byron had chiefly confined himself during the first winter he passed at Venice; but the tone of conversation at these small meetings being much too learned for his tastes, he was induced, the following year, to discontinue his attendance at them, and chose, in preference, the less erudite, but more easy, society of the Countess B * *. Of the sort of learning sometimes displayed by the 'blue' visitants at Madame A * * 's, a circumstance mentioned by the noble poet himself may afford some idea. The conversation happening to turn, one evening, upon the statue of Washington, by Canova, which had been just shipped off for the United States, Madame A * *, who was then engaged in compiling a *Description Raisonnée* of Canova's works, and was anxious for information respecting the subject of this statue, requested that some of her learned guests would detail to her all they knew of him. This task a Signor * * (author of a book on Geography and Statistics) undertook to perform, and, after some other equally sage and authentic details, concluded by informing her that 'Washington was killed in a duel by Burke.'—'What,' exclaimed Lord Byron, as he stood biting his lips with impatience during this conversation, 'what, in the name of folly, are you all thinking of?'—for he now recollected the famous duel between Hamilton and Colonel Burr, whom, it was evident, this learned worthy had confounded with Washington and Burke!

In addition to the motives easily conceivable for exchanging such a society for one that offered, at least, repose from such erudite efforts, there was also another

cause more immediately leading to the discontinuance of his visits to Madame A * *. This lady, who has been sometimes honoured with the title of 'the De Staël of Italy,' had written a book called 'Portraits,' containing sketches of the characters of various persons of note; and it being her intention to introduce Lord Byron into this assemblage, she had it intimated to his lordship that an article in which his portraiture had been attempted was to appear in a new edition she was about to publish of her work. It was expected, of course, that this intimation would awaken in him some desire to see the sketch; but, on the contrary, he was provoking enough not to manifest the least symptoms of curiosity. Again and again was the same hint, with as little success, conveyed; till, at length, on finding that no impression could be produced in this manner, a direct offer was made, in Madame A * *'s own name, to submit the article to his perusal. He could now contain himself no longer. With more sincerity than politeness, he returned for answer to the lady, that he was by no means ambitious of appearing in her work; that, from the shortness, as well as the distant nature of their acquaintance, it was impossible she could have qualified herself to be his portrait-painter, and that, in short, she could not oblige him more than by committing the article to the flames.

Whether the tribute thus unceremoniously treated ever met the eyes of Lord Byron, I know not; but he could hardly, I think, had he seen it, have escaped a slight touch of remorse at having thus spurned from him a portrait drawn in no unfriendly spirit, and, though affectedly expressed, seizing some of the less obvious features of his character,—as, for instance,

that diffidence so little to be expected from a career like his, with the discriminating niceness of a female hand. The following are extracts from this Portrait :—

‘ “Toi, dont le monde encore ignore le vrai nom,
‘ Esprit mystérieux, Mortel, Ange, ou Démon,
‘ Qui que tu sois, Byron, bon ou fatal génie,
‘ J’aime de tes conceits la sauvage harmonie.”

LAMARTINE.

‘ It would be to little purpose to dwell upon the
‘ mere beauty of a countenance in which the expression
‘ of an extraordinary mind was so conspicuous. What
‘ serenity was seated on the forehead, adorned with
‘ the finest chestnut hair, light, curling, and disposed
‘ with such art, that the art was hidden in the imita-
‘ tion of most pleasing nature ! What varied expres-
‘ sion in his eyes ! They were of the azure colour of
‘ the heavens, from which they seemed to derive their
‘ origin. His teeth, in form, in colour, in transpa-
‘ rency, resembled pearls ; but his cheeks were too
‘ delicately tinged with the hue of the pale rose. His
‘ neck, which he was in the habit of keeping unco-
‘ vered as much as the usages of society permitted,
‘ seemed to have been formed in a mould, and was
‘ very white. His hands were as beautiful as if they
‘ had been the works of art. His figure left nothing
‘ to be desired, particularly by those who found rather
‘ a grace than a defect in a certain light and gentle
‘ undulation of the person when he entered a room, and
‘ of which you hardly felt tempted to inquire the cause.
‘ Indeed it was scarcely perceptible,—the clothes he
‘ wore were so long.

‘ He was never seen to walk through the streets of
‘ Venice, nor along the pleasant banks of the Brenta,
‘ where he spent some weeks of the summer ; and

‘ there are some who assert that he has never seen,
‘ excepting from a window, the wonders of the “Piazza
‘ di San Marco ;”—so powerful in him was the desire
‘ of not showing himself to be deformed in any part of
‘ his person. I, however, believe that he has often
‘ gazed on those wonders, but in the late and solitary
‘ hour, when the stupendous edifices which sur-
‘ rounded him, illuminated by the soft and placid
‘ light of the moon, appeared a thousand times more
‘ lovely.

‘ His face appeared tranquil like the ocean on a fine
‘ spring morning ; but, like it, in an instant became
‘ changed into the tempestuous and terrible, if a pas-
‘ sion, (a passion did I say ?) a thought, a word, oc-
‘ curred to disturb his mind. His eyes then lost all
‘ their sweetness, and sparkled so that it became diffi-
‘ cult to look on them. So rapid a change would not
‘ have been thought possible ; but it was impossible to
‘ avoid acknowledging that the natural state of his
‘ mind was the tempestuous.

‘ What delighted him greatly one day annoyed him
‘ the next ; and whenever he appeared constant in the
‘ practice of any habits, it arose merely from the in-
‘ difference, not to say contempt, in which he held
‘ them all : whatever they might be, they were not
‘ worthy that he should occupy his thoughts with
‘ them. His heart was highly sensitive, and suffered
‘ itself to be governed in an extraordinary degree by
‘ sympathy ; but his imagination carried him away,
‘ and spoiled everything. He believed in presages,
‘ and delighted in the recollection that he held this
‘ belief in common with Napoleon. It appeared that,
‘ in proportion as his intellectual education was culti-
‘ vated, his moral education was neglected, and that

‘ he never suffered himself to know or observe other
‘ restraints than those imposed by his inclinations.
‘ Nevertheless, who could believe that he had a con-
‘ stant, and almost infantine timidity, of which the
‘ evidences were so apparent as to render its existence
‘ indisputable, notwithstanding the difficulty experi-
‘ enced in associating with Lord Byron a sentiment
‘ which had the appearance of modesty. Conscious
‘ as he was that, wherever he presented himself, all
‘ eyes were fixed on him, and all lips, particularly
‘ those of the women, were opened to say “ There he
‘ is, that is Lord Byron,”—he necessarily found him-
‘ self in the situation of an actor obliged to sustain a
‘ character, and to render an account, not to others (for
‘ about them he gave himself no concern), but to
‘ himself, of his every action and word. This occa-
‘ sioned him a feeling of uneasiness which was obvious
‘ to every one.

‘ He remarked on a certain subject (which in 1814
‘ was the topic of universal discourse) that ‘ the world
‘ was worth neither the trouble taken in its conquest,
‘ nor the regret felt at its loss,” which saying (if the
‘ worth of an expression could ever equal that of many
‘ and great actions) would almost show the thoughts
‘ and feelings of Lord Byron to be more stupendous
‘ and unmeasured than those of him respecting whom
‘ he spoke.

‘ His gymnastic exercises were sometimes violent,
‘ and at others almost nothing. His body, like his
‘ spirit, readily accommodated itself to all his inclina-
‘ tions. During an entire winter, he went out every
‘ morning alone to row himself to the island of Arme-
‘ nians (a small island situated in the midst of a tran-
‘ quil lake, and distant from Venice about half a

‘ league), to enjoy the society of those learned and
‘ hospitable monks, and to learn their difficult lan-
‘ guage ; and, in the evening, entering again into his
‘ gondola, he went, but only for a couple of hours, into
‘ company. A second winter, whenever the water of
‘ the lake was violently agitated, he was observed to
‘ cross it, and landing on the nearest *terra firma*, to
‘ fatigue at least two horses with riding.

‘ No one ever heard him utter a word of French,
‘ although he was perfectly conversant with that lan-
‘ guage. He hated the nation and its modern litera-
‘ ture ; in like manner, he held the modern Italian
‘ literature in contempt, and said it possessed but one
‘ living author,—a restriction which I know not whe-
‘ ther to term ridiculous, or false and injurious. His
‘ voice was sufficiently sweet and flexible. He spoke
‘ with much suavity, if not contradicted, but rather
‘ addressed himself to his neighbour than to the entire
‘ company.

‘ Very little food sufficed him ; and he preferred fish
‘ to flesh for this extraordinary reason, that the latter,
‘ he said, rendered him ferocious. He disliked seeing
‘ women eat ; and the cause of this extraordinary anti-
‘ pathy must be sought in the dread he always had,
‘ that the notion he loved to cherish of their perfec-
‘ tion and almost divine nature might be disturbed.
‘ Having always been governed by them, it would
‘ seem that his very self-love was pleased to take
‘ refuge in the idea of their excellence,—a sentiment
‘ which he knew how (God knows how) to reconcile
‘ with the contempt in which, shortly afterwards, almost
‘ with the appearance of satisfaction, he seemed to
‘ hold them. But contradictions ought not to surprise
‘ us in characters like Lord Byron’s ; and then, who

‘ does not know that the slave holds in detestation
‘ his ruler ?

‘ Lord Byron disliked his countrymen, but only
‘ because he knew that his morals were held in con-
‘ tempt by them. The English, themselves rigid
‘ observers of family duties, could not pardon him the
‘ neglect of his, nor his trampling on principles ; there-
‘ fore neither did he like being presented to them, nor
‘ did they, especially when they had their wives with
‘ them, like to cultivate his acquaintance. Still there
‘ was a strong desire in all of them to see him, and the
‘ women in particular, who did not dare to look at him
‘ but by stealth, said in an under voice, “ What a pity
‘ it is ! ” If, however, any of his compatriots of exalted
‘ rank and of high reputation came forward to treat
‘ him with courtesy, he showed himself obviously
‘ flattered by it, and was greatly pleased with such
‘ association. It seemed that to the wound which
‘ remained always open in his ulcerated heart, such
‘ soothing attentions were as drops of healing balm,
‘ which comforted him.

‘ Speaking of his marriage,—a delicate subject, but
‘ one still agreeable to him, if it was treated in a
‘ friendly voice,—he was greatly moved, and said it
‘ had been the innocent cause of all his errors and all
‘ his griefs. Of his wife he spoke with much respect
‘ and affection. He said she was an illustrious lady,
‘ distinguished for the qualities of her heart and under-
‘ standing, and that all the fault of their cruel separa-
‘ tion lay with himself. Now, was such language dic-
‘ tated by justice or by vanity ? Does it not bring to
‘ mind the saying of Julius, that the wife of Cæsar
‘ must not even be suspected ? What vanity in that
‘ saying of Cæsar ! In fact, if it had not been from

‘ vanity, Lord Byron would have admitted this to no
‘ one. Of his young daughter, his dear Ada, he spoke
‘ with great tenderness, and seemed to be pleased at
‘ the great sacrifice he had made in leaving her to com-
‘ fort her mother. The intense hatred he bore his
‘ mother-in-law, and a sort of Euryclea of Lady Byron,
‘ —two women, to whose influence he, in a great
‘ measure, attributed her estrangement from him,—
‘ demonstrated clearly how painful the separation
‘ was to him, notwithstanding some bitter pleasan-
‘ tries which occasionally occur in his writings against
‘ her also, dictated rather by rancour than by indiffer-
‘ ence.’

From the time of his misunderstanding with Madame A * * *, the visits of the noble poet were transferred to the house of the other great rallying point of Venetian society, Madame B * * *,—a lady in whose manners, though she had long ceased to be young, there still lingered much of that attaching charm, which a youth passed in successful efforts to please seldom fails to leave behind. That those powers of pleasing, too, were not yet gone, the fidelity of, at least, one devoted admirer testified; nor is she supposed to have thought it impossible that Lord Byron himself might yet be linked on at the end of that long chain of lovers, which had, through so many years, graced the triumphs of her beauty. If, however, there could have been, in any case, the slightest chance of such a conquest, she had herself completely frustrated it by introducing her distinguished visitor to Madame Guiccioli,—a step by which she at last lost, too, even the ornament of his presence at her parties, as in consequence of some slighting conduct, on her part, towards

his 'Dama,' he discontinued his attendance at her evening assemblies, and at the time of my visit to Venice had given up society altogether.

I could soon collect, from the tone held respecting his conduct at Madame B * * * 's, how subversive of all the morality of intrigue they considered the late step of which he had been guilty in withdrawing his acknowledged 'Amica' from the protection of her husband, and placing her, at once, under the same roof with himself. 'You must really (said the hostess herself to me) scold your friend;—till this unfortunate affair, he conducted himself *so well!*'—a eulogy on his previous moral conduct which, when I reported it the following day to my noble host, provoked at once a smile and sigh from his lips.

The chief subject of our conversation, when alone, was his marriage, and the load of obloquy which it had brought upon him. He was most anxious to know the worst that had been alleged of his conduct, and as this was our first opportunity of speaking together on the subject, I did not hesitate to put his candour most searchingly to the proof, not only by enumerating the various charges I had heard brought against him by others, but by specifying such portions of these charges as I had been inclined to think not incredible myself. To all this he listened with patience, and answered with the most unhesitating frankness, laughing to scorn the tales of unmanly outrage related of him, but, at the same time, acknowledging that there had been in his conduct but too much to blame and regret, and stating one or two occasions, during his domestic life, when he had been irritated into letting 'the breath of bitter words' escape him,—words, rather those of the

unquiet spirit that possessed him than his own, and which he now evidently remembered with a degree of remorse and pain which might well have entitled them to be forgotten by others.

It was, at the same time, manifest, that, whatever admissions he might be inclined to make respecting his own delinquencies, the inordinate measure of the punishment dealt out to him had sunk deeply into his mind, and, with the usual effect of such injustice, drove him also to be unjust himself;—so much so, indeed, as to impute to the quarter, to which he now traced all his ill fate, a feeling of fixed hostility to himself, which would not rest, he thought, even at his grave, but continue to persecute his memory as it was now embittering his life. So strong was this impression upon him, that during one of our few intervals of seriousness, he conjured me, by our friendship, if, as he both felt and hoped, I should survive him, not to let unmerited censure settle upon his name, but, while I surrendered him up to condemnation, where he deserved it, to vindicate him where aspersed.

How groundless and wrongful were these apprehensions, the early death which he so often predicted and sighed for has enabled us, unfortunately but too soon, to testify. So far from having to defend him against any such assailants, an unworthy voice or two, from persons more injurious as friends than as enemies, is all that I find raised in hostility to his name; while by none, I am inclined to think, would a generous amnesty over his grave be more readily and cordially concurred in than by her, among whose numerous virtues a forgiving charity towards himself was the only one to which she had not yet taught him to render justice.

I have already had occasion to remark, in another part of this work, that with persons who, like Lord Byron, live centred in their own tremulous web of sensitiveness, those friends of whom they see least, and who, therefore, least frequently come in collision with them in those every day realities from which such natures shrink so morbidly, have proportionately a greater chance of retaining a hold on their affections. There is, however, in long absence from persons of this temperament, another description of risk hardly less, perhaps, to be dreaded. If the station a friend holds in their hearts is, in near intercourse with them, in danger from their sensitiveness, it is almost equally, perhaps, at the mercy of their too active imaginations during absence. On this very point, I recollect once expressing my apprehensions to Lord Byron, in a passage of a letter addressed to him but a short time before his death, of which the following is, as nearly as I can recall it, the substance :—‘ When *with* you, I ‘ feel *sure* of you ; but, at a distance, one is often a little ‘ afraid of being made the victim, all of a sudden, of ‘ some of those fanciful suspicions, which, like meteoric ‘ stones, generate themselves (God knows how) in the ‘ upper regions of your imagination, and come clatter- ‘ ing down upon our heads, some fine sunny day, when ‘ we are least expecting such an invasion.’

In writing thus to him, I had more particularly in recollection a fancy of this kind respecting myself, which he had, not long before my present visit to him at Venice, taken into his head. In a ludicrous, and now, perhaps, forgotten publication of mine, giving an account of the adventures of an English family in Paris, there had occurred the following description of the chief hero of the tale.

- ‘ A fine, sallow, sublime sort of Werter-faced man,
- ‘ With mustachios which gave (what we read of so oft)
- ‘ The dear Corsair expression, half savage, half soft,—
- ‘ As hyænas in love may be fancied to look, or
- ‘ A something between Abelard and old Blucher.’

On seeing this doggrel, my noble friend,—as I might, indeed, with a little more thought, have anticipated,—conceived the notion that I meant to throw ridicule on his whole race of poetic heroes, and accordingly, as I learned from persons then in frequent intercourse with him, flew out into one of his fits of half humorous rage against me. This he now confessed himself, and, in laughing over the circumstance with me, owned that he had even gone so far as, in his first moments of wrath, to contemplate some little retaliation for this perfidious hit at his heroes. ‘ But ‘ when I recollected,’ said he, ‘ what pleasure it would ‘ give the whole tribe of blockheads and Blues to see ‘ you and me turning out against each other, I gave ‘ up the idea.’ He was, indeed, a striking instance of what may be almost invariably observed, that they who best know how to wield the weapon of ridicule themselves, are the most alive to its power in the hands of others. I remember, one day,—in the year 1813, I think,—as we were conversing together about critics and their influence on the public, ‘ For my part,’ he exclaimed, ‘ I don’t care what they say of me, so they don’t quiz me.’ ‘ Oh, you need not fear that,’—I answered, with something, perhaps, of a half suppressed smile on my features,—‘ nobody could quiz *you*.’ ‘ *You could*, you villain!’ he replied, clenching his hand at me, and looking, at the same time, with comic earnestness into my face.

Before I proceed any farther with my own recollections, I shall here take the opportunity of extracting

some curious particulars respecting the habits and mode of life of my friend while at Venice, from an account obligingly furnished me by a gentleman who long resided in that city, and who, during the greater part of Lord Byron's stay, lived on terms of the most friendly intimacy with him.

‘ I have often lamented that I kept no notes of his
‘ observations during our rides and aquatic excursions.
‘ Nothing could exceed the vivacity and variety of
‘ his conversation, or the cheerfulness of his manner.
‘ His remarks on the surrounding objects were always
‘ original: and most particularly striking was the
‘ quickness with which he availed himself of every
‘ circumstance, however trifling in itself, and such as
‘ would have escaped the notice of almost any other
‘ person, to carry his point in such arguments as we
‘ might chance to be engaged in. He was feelingly
‘ alive to the beauties of nature, and took great interest
‘ in any observations, which, as a dabbler in the arts,
‘ I ventured to make upon the effects of light and shadow, or the changes produced in the colour of objects
‘ by every variation in the atmosphere.

‘ The spot where we usually mounted our horses
‘ had been a Jewish cemetery; but the French, during
‘ their occupation of Venice, had thrown down the
‘ enclosures, and levelled all the tombstones with the
‘ ground, in order that they might not interfere with
‘ the fortifications upon the Lido, under the guns of
‘ which it was situated. To this place, as it was known
‘ to be that where he alighted from his gondola and
‘ met his horses, the curious amongst our country
‘ people, who were anxious to obtain a glimpse of him,
‘ used to resort; and it was amusing in the extreme to
‘ witness the excessive coolness with which ladies, as

‘ well as gentlemen, would advance within a very few
‘ paces of him, eyeing him, some with their glasses, as
‘ they would have done a statue in a museum, or the
‘ wild beasts at Exeter ‘Change. However flattering
‘ this might be to a man’s vanity, Lord Byron, though
‘ he bore it very patiently, expressed himself, as I
‘ believe he really was, excessively annoyed at it.

‘ I have said that our usual ride was ‘along the sea-
‘ shore, and that the spot where we took horse, and of
‘ course dismounted, had been a cemetery. It will
‘ readily be believed, that some caution was necessary
‘ in riding over the broken tombstones, and that it was
‘ altogether an awkward place for horses to pass. As
‘ the length of our ride was not very great, scarcely
‘ more than six miles in all, we seldom rode fast, that
‘ we might at least prolong its duration; and enjoy as
‘ much as possible the refreshing air of the Adriatic.
‘ One day, as we were leisurely returning homewards,
‘ Lord Byron, all at once, and without saying anything
‘ to me, set spurs to his horse and started off at full
‘ gallop, making the greatest haste he could to get to
‘ his gondola. I could not conceive what fit had seized
‘ him, and had some difficulty in keeping even within
‘ a reasonable distance of him, while I looked around
‘ me to discover, if I were able, what could be the
‘ cause of his unusual precipitation. At length I per-
‘ ceived at some distance two or three gentlemen, who
‘ were running along the opposite side of the island
‘ nearest the Lagoon, parallel with him, towards his
‘ gondola, hoping to get there in time to see him alight;
‘ and a race actually took place between them, he en-
‘ deavouring to outstrip them. In this he, in fact,
‘ succeeded, and, throwing himself quickly from his
‘ horse, leapt into his gondola, of which he hastily

‘ closed the blinds, ensconcing himself in a corner so
‘ as not to be seen. For my own part, not choosing
‘ to risk my neck over the ground I have spoken of, I
‘ followed more leisurely as soon as I came amongst
‘ the gravestones, but got to the place of embarkation
‘ just at the same moment with my curious country-
‘ men, and in time to witness their disappointment at
‘ having had their run for nothing. I found him exult-
‘ ing in his success in outstripping them. He expressed
‘ in strong terms his annoyance at what he called their
‘ impertinence, whilst I could not but laugh at his im-
‘ patience, as well as at the mortification of the unfor-
‘ tunate pedestrians, whose eagerness to see him, I said,
‘ was, in my opinion, highly flattering to him. That,
‘ he replied, depended on the feeling with which they
‘ came, and he had not the vanity to believe that they
‘ were influenced by any admiration of his character
‘ or of his abilities, but that they were impelled merely
‘ by idle curiosity. Whether it was so or not, I can-
‘ not help thinking that if they had been of the other
‘ sex, he would not have been so eager to escape from
‘ their observation, as in that case he would have
‘ repaid them glance for glance.

‘ The curiosity that was expressed by all classes of
‘ travellers to see him, and the eagerness with which
‘ they endeavoured to pick up any anecdotes of his
‘ mode of life, were carried to a length which will
‘ hardly be credited. It formed the chief subject of
‘ their inquiries of the gondoliers who conveyed them
‘ from terra firma to the floating city; and these
‘ people, who are generally loquacious, were not at all
‘ backward in administering to the taste and humours
‘ of their passengers, relating to them the most extra-
‘ vagant and often unfounded stories. They took care

‘ to point out the house where he lived, and to give
‘ such hints of his movements as might afford them an
‘ opportunity of seeing him. Many of the English
‘ visitors, under pretext of seeing his house, in which
‘ there were no paintings of any consequence, nor,
‘ besides himself, anything worthy of notice, contrived
‘ to obtain admittance through the cupidity of his ser-
‘ vants, and with the most barefaced impudence forced
‘ their way even into his bedroom, in the hopes of
‘ seeing him. Hence arose, in a great measure, his
‘ bitterness towards them, which he has expressed in
‘ a note to one of his poems, on the occasion of some
‘ unfounded remark made upon him by an anonymous
‘ traveller in Italy ; and it certainly appears well cal-
‘ culated to foster that cynicism which prevails in his
‘ latter works more particularly, and which, as well as
‘ the misanthropical expressions that occur in those
‘ which first raised his reputation, I do not believe to
‘ have been his natural feeling. Of this I am certain,
‘ that I never witnessed greater kindness than in Lord
‘ Byron.

‘ The inmates of his family were all extremely
‘ attached to him, and would have endured anything
‘ on his account. He was indeed culpably lenient to
‘ them ; for even when instances occurred of their
‘ neglecting their duty, or taking an undue advantage
‘ of his good-nature, he rather bantered than spoke
‘ seriously to them upon it, and could not bring him-
‘ self to discharge them, even when he had threatened
‘ to do so. An instance occurred within my knowledge
‘ of his unwillingness to act harshly towards a trades-
‘ man whom he had materially assisted, not only by
‘ lending him money, but by forwarding his interest in
‘ every way that he could. Notwithstanding repeated

‘ acts of kindness on Lord Byron’s part, this man
‘ robbed and cheated him in the most barefaced man-
‘ ner, and when at length Lord Byron was induced to
‘ sue him at law for the recovery of his money, the
‘ only punishment he inflicted upon him, when sen-
‘ tence against him was passed, was to put him in pri-
‘ son for one week, and then to let him out again,
‘ although his debtor had subjected him to a consider-
‘ able additional expense, by dragging him into all the
‘ different courts of appeal, and that he never at last
‘ recovered one halfpenny of the money owed to him.
‘ Upon this subject he writes to me from Ravenna.
‘ “ If * * is *in* (prison), let him out ; if *out*, put him in
‘ for a week, merely for a lesson, and give him a good
‘ lecture.”

‘ He was also ever ready to assist the distressed, and
‘ he was most unostentatious in his charities : for be-
‘ sides considerable sums which he gave away to ap-
‘ plicants at his own house, he contributed largely by
‘ weekly and monthly allowances to persons whom he
‘ had never seen, and who, as the money reached them
‘ by other hands, did not even know who was their
‘ benefactor. One or two instances might be adduced
‘ where his charity certainly bore an appearance of
‘ ostentation ; one particularly, when he sent fifty louis-
‘ d’or to a poor printer whose house had been burnt to
‘ the ground, and all his property destroyed ; but even
‘ this was not unattended with advantage ; for it in a
‘ manner compelled the Austrian authorities to do
‘ something for the poor sufferer, which I have no
‘ hesitation in saying they would not have done other-
‘ wise ; and I attribute it entirely to the publicity of
‘ his donation, that they allowed the man the use of
‘ an unoccupied house belonging to the government

‘ until he could rebuild his own, or re-establish his
‘ business elsewhere. Other instances might be
‘ perhaps discovered where his liberalities proceeded
‘ from selfish, and not very worthy motives* ; but
‘ these are rare, and it would be unjust in the extreme
‘ to assume them as proofs of his character.’

It has been already mentioned that, in writing to my noble friend to announce my coming, I had expressed a hope that he would be able to go on with me to Rome ; and I had the gratification of finding, on my arrival, that he was fully prepared to enter into this plan. On becoming acquainted, however, with all the details of his present situation, I so far sacrificed my own wishes and pleasure as to advise strongly that he should remain at La Mira. In the first place, I saw reason to apprehend that his leaving Madame Guiccioli at this crisis might be the means of drawing upon him the suspicion of neglecting, if not actually deserting, a young person who had just sacrificed so much to her love for him, and whose position, at this moment, between husband and lover, it required all the generous prudence of the latter to shield from further shame or fall. There had just occurred too, as it appeared to me, a most favourable opening for the retrieval of, at least, the imprudent part of the transaction, by replacing the lady instantly under her husband’s protection, and thus enabling her still to retain that station in society which, in such society, nothing but such imprudence could have endangered.

This latter hope had been suggested by a letter he one day showed me (as we were dining together alone,

* The writer here, no doubt, alludes to such questionable liberalities as those exercised towards the husbands of his two favourites, Madame S * * and the Fornarina.

at the well-known Pellegrino), which had that morning been received by the Contessa from her husband, and the chief object of which was—*not* to express any censure of her conduct, but to suggest that she should prevail upon her noble admirer to transfer into his keeping a sum of £1000, which was then lying, if I remember right, in the hands of Lord Byron's banker at Ravenna, but which the worthy Count professed to think would be more advantageously placed in his own. Security, the writer added, would be given, and five per cent. interest allowed; as to accept of the sum on any other terms he should hold to be an 'avvilimento' to him. Though, as regarded the lady herself, who has since proved, by a most noble sacrifice, how perfectly disinterested were her feelings throughout*, this trait of so wholly opposite a character in her lord must have still further increased her disgust at returning to him, yet so important did it seem, as well for her lover's sake as her own, to re-

* The circumstance here alluded to may be most clearly, perhaps, communicated to my readers through the medium of the following extract from a letter which Mr. Barry (the friend and banker of Lord Byron) did me the favour of addressing to me, soon after his lordship's death:—'When Lord Byron went to Greece, he gave me orders to advance money to Madame G * *; but that lady would never consent to receive any. His lordship had also told me that he meant to leave his will in my hands, and that there would be a bequest in it of 10,000*l.* to Madame G * *. He mentioned this circumstance also to Lord Blessington. When the melancholy news of his death reached me, I took for granted that this will would be found among the sealed papers he had left with me; but there was no such instrument. I immediately then wrote to Madame G * *, inquiring if she knew anything concerning it, and mentioning, at the same time, what his lordship had said as to the legacy. To this the lady replied that he had frequently spoken to her on the same subject, but that she had always cut the conversation short, as it was a topic she by no means liked to hear him speak upon. In addition, she expressed a wish that no such will as I had mentioned would be found; as her circumstances were already sufficiently independent, and the world might put a wrong construction on her attachment, should it appear that her fortunes were, in any degree, bettered by it.'

trace, while there was yet time, their last imprudent step, that even the sacrifice of this sum, which I saw would materially facilitate such an arrangement, did not appear to me by any means too high a price to pay for it. On this point, however, my noble friend entirely differed with me; and nothing could be more humorous and amusing than the manner in which, in his newly assumed character of a lover of money, he dilated on the many virtues of a thousand pounds, and his determination not to part with a single one of them to Count Guiccioli. Of his confidence, too, in his own power of extricating himself from this difficulty he spoke with equal gaiety and humour; and Mr. Scott, who joined our party after dinner, having taken the same view of the subject as I did, he laid a wager of two sequins with that gentleman, that, without any such disbursement, he would yet bring all right again, and 'save the lady and the money too.'

It is, indeed, certain, that he had at this time taken up the whim (for it hardly deserves a more serious name) of minute and constant watchfulness over his expenditure; and, as most usually happens, it was with the increase of his means that this increased sense of the value of money came. The first symptom I saw of this new fancy of his was the exceeding joy which he manifested on my presenting to him a rouleau of twenty Napoleons, which Lord K* * d, to whom he had, on some occasion, lent that sum, had intrusted me with, at Milan, to deliver into his hands. With the most joyous and diverting eagerness, he tore open the paper, and, in counting over the sum, stopped frequently to congratulate himself on the recovery of it.

Of his household frugalities I speak but on the

authority of others ; but it is not difficult to conceive that, with a restless spirit like his, which delighted always in having something to contend with, and which, but a short time before, 'for want,' as he said, 'of something craggy to break upon,' had tortured itself with the study of the Armenian language, he should, in default of all better excitement, find a sort of stir and amusement in the task of contesting, inch by inch, every encroachment of expense, and endeavouring to suppress what he himself calls

' That climax of all earthly ills,
' The inflammation of our weekly bills.'

In truth, his constant recurrence to the praise of avarice in *Don Juan*, and the humorous zest with which he delights to dwell on it, shows how new-fangled, as well as how far from serious, was his adoption of this 'good old-gentlemanly vice.' In the same spirit he had, a short time before my arrival at Venice, established a hoarding-box, with a slit in the lid, into which he occasionally put sequins, and, at stated periods, opened it to contemplate his treasures. His own ascetic style of living enabled him, as far as himself was concerned, to gratify this taste for economy in no ordinary degree,—his daily bill of fare, when the *Margarita* was his companion; consisting, I have been assured, of but four beccafichi, of which the *Fornarina* eat three, leaving even him hungry.

That his parsimony, however (if this new phasis of his ever-shifting character is to be called by such a name), was very far from being of that kind which Bacon condemns, as 'withholding men from works of liberality,' is apparent from all that is known of his munificence, at this very period,—some particulars of which, from a most authentic source, have just been

cited, proving amply that while, for the indulgence of a whim, he kept one hand closed, he gave free course to his generous nature by dispensing lavishly from the other. It should be remembered, too, that as long as money shall continue to be one of the great sources of power, so long will they who seek influence over their fellow-men attach value to it as an instrument; and the more lowly they are inclined to estimate the disinterestedness of the human heart, the more available and precious will they consider the talisman that gives such power over it. Hence, certainly, it is not among those who have thought highest of mankind that the disposition to avarice has most generally displayed itself. In Swift the love of money was strong and avowed; and to Voltaire the same propensity was also frequently imputed,—on about as sufficient grounds, perhaps, as to Lord Byron.

On the day preceding that of my departure from Venice, my noble host, on arriving from La Mira to dinner, told me, with all the glee of a schoolboy who had been just granted a holiday, that, as this was my last evening, the Contessa had given him leave to ‘make a night of it,’ and that accordingly he would not only accompany me to the opera, but we should sup together at some café (as in the old times) afterwards. Observing a volume in his gondola, with a number of paper marks between the leaves, I inquired of him what it was?—‘Only a book,’ he answered, ‘from which I am trying to *crib*, as I do wherever I can* ;—and that’s the way I get the character of an ‘original poet.’ On taking it up and looking into it, I exclaimed, ‘Ah, my old friend, Agathon†!’—

* This will remind the reader of Moliere’s avowal in speaking of wit:—‘C’est mon bien et je le prends partout où je le trouve.’

† The History of Agathon, by Wieland.

‘What!’ he cried, archly, ‘you have been beforehand with me there, have you?’

Though in imputing to himself premeditated plagiarism, he was, of course, but jesting, it was, I am inclined to think, his practice, when engaged in the composition of any work, to excite thus his vein by the perusal of others, on the same subject or plan, from which the slightest hint caught by his imagination, as he read, was sufficient to kindle there such a train of thought as, but for that spark, had never been awakened, and of which he himself soon forgot the source. In the present instance, the inspiration he sought was of no very elevating nature,—the anti-spiritual doctrines of the Sophist in this Romance * being what chiefly, I suspect, attracted his attention to its pages, as not unlikely to supply him with fresh argument and sarcasm for those depreciating views of human nature and its destiny, which he was now, with all the wantonness of unbounded genius, enforcing in *Don Juan*.

Of this work he was, at the time of my visit to him,

* Between Wieland, the author of this Romance, and Lord Byron, may be observed some of those generic points of resemblance which it is so interesting to trace in the characters of men of genius. The German poet, it is said, never perused any work that made a strong impression upon him, without being stimulated to commence one, himself, on the same topic and plan; and in Lord Byron the imitative principle was almost equally active,—there being few of his Poems that might not, in the same manner, be traced to the strong impulse given to his imagination by the perusal of some work that had just before interested him. In the history, too, of their lives and feelings, there was a strange and painful coincidence,—the revolution that took place in all Wieland’s opinions, from the Platonism and romance of his youthful days, to the material and Epicurean doctrines that pervaded all his maturer works, being chiefly, it is supposed, brought about by the shock his heart had received from a disappointment of its affections in early life. Speaking of the illusion of this first passion, in one of his letters, he says,—‘It is one for which no joys, no honours, no gifts of fortune, not even wisdom itself can afford an equivalent, and which, when it has once vanished, returns no more.’

writing the Third Canto, and before dinner, one day, read me two or three hundred lines of it;—beginning with the stanzas ‘ Oh Wellington, &c.’ which at that time formed the opening of this Third Canto, but were afterwards reserved for the commencement of the Ninth. My opinion of the Poem, both as regarded its talent and its mischief, he had already been made acquainted with, from my having been one of those,—his Committee, as he called us,—to whom, at his own desire, the manuscript of the two first Cantos had been submitted, and who, as the reader has seen, angered him not a little by deprecating the publication of it. In a letter which I, at that time, wrote to him on the subject, after praising the exquisite beauty of the scenes between Juan and Haidée, I ventured to say, ‘ Is it not odd that the same licence which, in ‘ your early Satire, you blamed *me* for being guilty of ‘ on the borders of my twentieth year, you are now ‘ yourself (with infinitely greater power, and therefore infinitely greater mischief) indulging in *after* ‘ thirty !’

Though I now found him, in full defiance of such remonstrances, proceeding with this work, he had yet, as his own letters prove, been so far influenced by the general outcry against his Poem, as to feel the zeal and zest with which he had commenced it considerably abated,—so much so, as to render, ultimately, in his own opinion, the Third and Fourth Cantos much inferior in spirit to the two first. So sensitive, indeed,—in addition to his usual abundance of this quality,—did he, at length, grow on the subject, that when Mr. W. Bankes, who succeeded me, as his visitor, happened to tell him, one day, that he had heard a Mr. Saunders (or some such name), then resident at

Venice, declare that, in his opinion, ‘Don Juan was all Grub-street,’ such an effect had this disparaging speech upon his mind, (though coming from a person who, as he himself would have it, was ‘nothing but a d—d salt-fish seller,’) that, for some time after, by his own confession to Mr. Bankes, he could not bring himself to write another line of the Poem; and, one morning, opening a drawer where the neglected manuscript lay, he said to his friend, ‘Look here—this is all Mr. Saunders’s “Grub-street.”’

To return, however, to the details of our last evening together at Venice. After a dinner with Mr. Scott at the Pellegrino, we all went, rather late, to the opera, where the principal part in the *Baccanali di Roma* was represented by a female singer, whose chief claim to reputation, according to Lord Byron, lay in her having *stilettoed* one of her favourite lovers. In the intervals between the singing he pointed out to me different persons among the audience, to whom celebrity of various sorts, but, for the most part, disreputable, attached; and of one lady who sat near us, he related an anecdote, which, whether new or old, may, as creditable to Venetian facetiousness, be worth, perhaps, repeating. This lady had, it seems, been pronounced by Napoleon the finest woman in Venice; but the Venetians, not quite agreeing with this opinion of the great man, contented themselves with calling her ‘*La Bella per Decréto*,’—adding (as the Decrees always begin with the word ‘*Considerando*’), ‘*Ma senza il Considerando*.’

From the opera, in pursuance of our agreement to ‘make a night of it,’ we betook ourselves to a sort of *cabaret* in the Place of St. Mark, and there, within a few yards of the Palace of the Doges, sat drinking hot

brandy punch, and laughing over old times, till the clock of St. Mark struck the second hour of the morning. Lord Byron then took me in his gondola, and, the moon being in its fullest splendour, he made the gondoliers row us to such points of view as might enable me to see Venice, at that hour, to advantage. Nothing could be more solemnly beautiful than the whole scene around, and I had, for the first time, the Venice of my dreams before me. All those meaner details which so offend the eye by day were now softened down by the moonlight into a sort of visionary indistinctness; and the effect of that silent city of palaces, sleeping, as it were, upon the waters, in the bright stillness of the night, was such as could not but affect deeply even the least susceptible imagination. My companion saw that I was moved by it, and though familiar with the scene himself, seemed to give way, for the moment, to the same strain of feeling; and, as we exchanged a few remarks suggested by that wreck of human glory before us, his voice, habitually so cheerful, sunk into a tone of mournful sweetness, such as I had rarely before heard from him and shall not easily forget. This mood, however, was but of the moment; some quick turn of ridicule soon carried him off into a totally different vein, and at about three o'clock in the morning, at the door of his own palazzo, we parted, laughing, as we had met;—an agreement having been first made that I should take an early dinner with him next day at his villa, on my road to Ferrara.

Having employed the morning of the following day in completing my round of sights at Venice,—taking care to visit specially ‘that picture by Giorgione,’ to which the poet’s exclamation, ‘*such a*

woman*!' will long continue to attract all votaries of beauty,—I took my departure from Venice, and, at about three o'clock, arrived at La Mira. I found my noble host waiting to receive me, and, in passing with him through the hall, saw his little Allegra, who, with her nursery-maid, was standing there as if just returned from a walk. To the perverse fancy he had for falsifying his own character, and even imputing to himself faults the most alien to his nature, I have already frequently adverted, and had, on this occasion, a striking instance of it. After I had spoken a little, in passing, to the child, and made some remark on its beauty, he said to me—'Have you any notion—but I suppose *you* have—of what they call the parental feeling? For myself, I have not the least.' And yet, when that child died, in a year or two afterwards, he who now uttered this artificial speech was so overwhelmed by the event, that those who were about him at the time actually trembled for his reason!

A short time before dinner he left the room, and in a minute or two returned, carrying in his hand a white leather bag. 'Look here,' he said, holding it up—'this would be worth something to Murray, though *you*, I dare say, would not give sixpence for it.' 'What is it?' I asked.—'My Life and Adventures,' he answered. On hearing this, I raised my hands in a gesture of wonder. 'It is not a thing,' he continued, 'that can be published during my lifetime, but you may have it—if you like—there, do whatever you

* ' 'Tis but a portrait of his son and wife,
And self; but *such* a woman! love in life!

BEPPPO, STANZA XII.

This seems, by the way, to be an incorrect description of the picture, as, according to Vasari and others, Giorgione never was married, and died young.

‘ please with it.’ In taking the bag, and thanking him most warmly, I added, ‘ This will make a nice ‘ legacy for my little Tom, who shall astonish the latter ‘ days of the nineteenth century with it.’ He then added, ‘ You may show it to any of our friends ‘ you think worthy of it :’—and this is, nearly word for word, the whole of what passed between us on the subject.

At dinner we were favoured with the presence of Madame Guiccioli, who was so obliging as to furnish me, at Lord Byron’s suggestion, with a letter of introduction to her brother, Count Gamba, whom it was probable, they both thought, I should meet at Rome. This letter I never had an opportunity of presenting ; and as it was left open for me to read, and was, the greater part of it, I have little doubt, dictated by my noble friend, I may venture, without impropriety, to give an extract from it here ;—premising that the allusion to the ‘ Castle, &c.’ refers to some tales respecting the cruelty of Lord Byron to his wife, which the young Count had heard, and, at this time, implicitly believed. After a few sentences of compliment to the bearer, the letter proceeds—‘ He is on his way to see the wonders ‘ of Rome, and there is no one, I am sure, more qualified to enjoy them. I shall be gratified and obliged ‘ by your acting, as far as you can, as his guide. He ‘ is a friend of Lord Byron’s, and much more accurately ‘ acquainted with his history than those who have ‘ related it to you. He will accordingly describe to ‘ you, if you ask him, *the shape, the dimensions*, and ‘ whatever else you may please to require, of *that Castle ‘ in which he keeps imprisoned a young and innocent wife,* ‘ &c. &c. My dear Pietro, whenever you feel inclined ‘ to laugh, do send two lines of answer to your sister,

‘ who loves and ever will love you with the greatest
‘ tenderness.—Terésa Guiccioli*.’

After expressing his regret that I had not been able to prolong my stay at Venice, my noble friend said, ‘ At least, I think, you might spare a day or two to go
‘ with me to Arquà. I should like,’ he continued thoughtfully, ‘ to visit that tomb with you:’—then, breaking off into his usual gay tone, ‘ a pair of poetical
‘ pilgrims—eh, Tom, what say you?’—That I should have declined this offer, and thus lost the opportunity of an excursion which would have been remembered, as a bright dream, through all my after life, is a circumstance I never can think of without wonder and self-reproach. But the main design on which I had then set my mind of reaching Rome, and, if possible, Naples, within the limited period which circumstances allowed, rendered me far less alive than I ought to have been to the preciousness of the episode thus offered to me.

When it was time for me to depart, he expressed his intention to accompany me a few miles, and, ordering his horses to follow, proceeded with me in the carriage as far as Strà, where for the last time—how little thinking it was to be the last!—I bade my kind and admirable friend farewell.

* ‘ Egli viene per vedere le meraviglie di questa Città, e sono certa
‘ che nessuno meglio di lui saprebbe gustarle. Mi sarà grato che vi
‘ facciate sua guida come potrete, e voi poi me ne avrete obbligo. Egli
‘ è amico de Lord Byron—sà la sua storia assai più precisamente di
‘ quelli che a voi la raccontarono. Egli dunque vi racconterà se lo in-
‘ terrogherete *la forma, le dimensioni*, e tuttociò che vi piacerà del *Cas-
‘ tello ove tiene imprigionata una giovane innocente sposa, &c.&c.* Mio
‘ caro Pietro, quando ti sei bene sfogato a ridere, allora rispondi due righe
‘ alla tua sorella, che t’ ama e t’ amerà sempre colla maggiore tene-
‘ rezza.’

LETTER 341.

TO MR. HOPPNER.

‘ *October 22nd, 1819.*

‘ I am glad to hear of your return, but I do not
‘ know how to congratulate you—unless you think
‘ differently of Venice from what I think now, and you
‘ thought always. I am, besides, about to renew your
‘ troubles by- requesting you to be judge between
‘ Mr. E*** and myself in a small matter of imputed
‘ speculation and irregular accounts on the part of that
‘ phoenix of secretaries. As I knew that you had not
‘ parted friends, at the same time that *I* refused for
‘ my own part any judgment but *yours*, I offered him
‘ his choice of any person, the *least* scoundrel native
‘ to be found in Venice, as his own umpire; but he
‘ expressed himself so convinced of your impartiality,
‘ that he declined any but *you*. This is in his favour.
‘ —The paper within will explain to you the default
‘ in his accounts. You will hear his explanation, and
‘ decide if it so please you. I shall not appeal from
‘ the decision.

‘ As he complained that his salary was insufficient,
‘ I determined to have his accounts examined, and the
‘ enclosed was the result.—It is all in black and white
‘ with documents, and I have despatched Fletcher to
‘ explain (or rather to perplex) the matter.

‘ I have had much civility and kindness from Mr.
‘ Dorville during your journey, and I thank him accord-
‘ ingly.

‘ Your letter reached me at your departure* and

* Mr. Hoppner, before his departure from Venice for Switzerland, had, with all the zeal of a true friend, written a letter to Lord Byron, entreating him ‘ to leave Ravenna while yet he had a whole skin, and ‘ urging him not to risk the safety of a person he appeared so sincerely ‘ attached to—as well as his own—for the gratification of a momentary

‘ displeased me very much:—not that it might not be
‘ true in its statement and kind in its intention, but you
‘ have lived long enough to know how useless all such
‘ representations ever are and must be in cases where
‘ the passions are concerned. To reason with men in
‘ such a situation is like reasoning with a drunkard in
‘ his cups—the only answer you will get from him is,
‘ that he is sober, and you are drunk. -

‘ Upon that subject we will (if you like) be silent.
‘ You might only say what would distress me without
‘ answering any purpose whatever; and I have too
‘ many obligations to you to answer you in the same
‘ style. So that you should recollect that you have
‘ also that advantage over me. I hope to see you soon.

‘ I suppose you know that they said at Venice, that
‘ I was arrested at Bologna as a *Carbonaro*—a story
‘ about as true as their usual conversation. Moore
‘ has been here—I lodged him in my house at Venice,
‘ and went to see him daily; but I could not at that
‘ time quit La Mira entirely. You and I were not
‘ very far from meeting in Switzerland. With my
‘ best respects to Mrs. Hoppner, believe me ever and
‘ truly, &c.

‘ P.S. Allegra is here in good health and spirits—
‘ I shall keep her with me till I go to England, which
‘ will perhaps be in the spring. It has just occurred
‘ to me that you may not perhaps like to undertake
‘ the office of judge between Mr. E. and your humble
‘ servant.—Of course, as Mr. Liston (the comedian,
‘ not the ambassador) says, “*it is all hoptional*,” but I

‘ passion, which could only be a source of regret to both parties.’ In
the same letter Mr. Hoppner informed him of some reports he had heard
lately at Venice, which, though possibly, he said, unfounded, had much
increased his anxiety respecting the consequences of the connexion
formed by him.

‘ have no other resource. I do not wish to find him a
 ‘ rascal, if it can be avoided, and would rather think
 ‘ him guilty of carelessness than cheating. The case
 ‘ is this—can I, or not, give him a character for
 ‘ *honesty*?—It is not my intention to continue him in
 ‘ my service.’

LETTER 342.

TO MR. HOPPNER.

‘ October 25th, 1819.

‘ You need not have made any excuses about *the*
 ‘ letter; I never said but that you might, could,
 ‘ should, or would have reason. I merely described
 ‘ my own state of inaptitude to listen to it at that time,
 ‘ and in those circumstances. Besides, you did not
 ‘ speak from your *own* authority—but from what you
 ‘ said you had heard. Now my blood boils to hear an
 ‘ Italian speaking ill of another Italian, because, though
 ‘ they lie in particular, they speak truth in general by
 ‘ speaking ill at all—and although they know that
 ‘ they are trying and wishing to lie, they do not
 ‘ succeed, merely because they can say nothing so
 ‘ bad of each other, that it *may* not, and must not be
 ‘ true, from the atrocity of their long debased national
 ‘ character*.

‘ With regard to E. you will perceive a most irre-
 ‘ gular, extravagant account, without proper docu-

* ‘ This language’ (says Mr. Hoppner, in some remarks upon the
 above letter) ‘ is strong, but it was the language of prejudice; and he
 ‘ was rather apt thus to express the feelings of the moment, without
 ‘ troubling himself to consider how soon he might be induced to change
 ‘ them. He was at this time so sensitive on the subject of Madame * *,
 ‘ that, merely because some persons had disapproved of her conduct, he
 ‘ declaimed in the above manner against the whole nation. I never’ (con-
 tinues Mr. Hoppner) ‘ was partial to Venice; but disliked it almost
 ‘ from the first month of my residence there. Yet I experienced more
 ‘ kindness in that place than I ever met with in any country, and wit-
 ‘ nessed acts of generosity and disinterestedness such as rarely are met
 ‘ with elsewhere.’

‘ ments to support it. He demanded an increase of
‘ salary, which made me suspect him ; he supported
‘ an outrageous extravagance of expenditure; and did
‘ not like the dismissal of the cook ; he never com-
‘ plained of him—as in duty bound—at the time of
‘ his robberies. I can only say, that the house ex-
‘ pense is now under *one half* of what it then was, as
‘ he himself admits. He charged for a comb *eighteen*
‘ francs,—the real price was *eight*. He charged a
‘ passage from Fusina for a person named Iambelli, who
‘ paid it *herself*, as she will prove if necessary. He
‘ fancies, or asserts himself, the victim of a domestic
‘ complot against him ;—accounts are accounts—prices
‘ are prices ;—let him make out a fair detail. I am not
‘ prejudiced against him—on the contrary, I supported
‘ him against the complaints of his wife, and of his
‘ former master, at a time when I could have crushed
‘ him like an earwig ; and if he is a scoundrel, he is the
‘ greatest of scoundrels, an ungrateful one. The truth
‘ is, probably, that he thought I was leaving Venice,
‘ and determined to make the most of it. At present
‘ he keeps bringing in *account after account*, though
‘ he had always money in hand—as I believe you know
‘ my system was never to allow longer than a week’s
‘ bills to run. Pray read him this letter—I desire
‘ nothing to be concealed against which he may defend
‘ himself.

‘ Pray how is your little boy ? and how are you ?—
‘ I shall be up in Venice very soon, and we will be
‘ bilious together. I hate the place and all that it
‘ inherits.

‘ Yours, &c.’

LETTER 343.

TO MR. HOPPNER.

‘ October 28th, 1819.

‘ I have to thank you for your letter, and your com-
‘ pliment to Don Juan. I said nothing to you about
‘ it, understanding that it is a sore subject with the
‘ moral reader, and has been the cause of a great row ;
‘ but I am glad you like it. I will say nothing about
‘ the shipwreck, except that I hope you think it is as
‘ *nautical* and *technical* as verse could admit in the
‘ octave measure.

‘ The poem has *not sold well*, so Murray says—“ but
‘ the best judges, &c. say, &c.” so says that worthy
‘ man. I have never seen it in print. The Third
‘ Canto is in advance about one hundred stanzas ; but
‘ the failure of the two first has weakened my *estro*,
‘ and it will neither be so good as the two former, nor
‘ completed, unless I get a little more *riscaldato* in its
‘ behalf. I understand the outcry was beyond every-
‘ thing.—Pretty cant for people who read Tom Jones,
‘ and Roderick Random, and the Bath Guide, and
‘ Ariosto, and Dryden, and Pope—to say nothing of
‘ Little’s Poems ! Of course I refer to the *morality* of
‘ these works, and not to any pretension of mine to
‘ compete with them in anything but decency. I hope
‘ yours is the Paris edition, and that you did not pay
‘ the London price. I have seen neither except in
‘ the newspapers.

‘ Pray make my respects to Mrs. H., and take care
‘ of your little boy. All my household have the fever
‘ and ague, except Fletcher, Allegra, and *mysen* (as
‘ we used to say in Nottinghamshire), and the horses,
‘ and Mutz, and Moretto. In the beginning of No-
‘ vember, perhaps sooner, I expect to have the plea-
‘ sure of seeing you. To-day I got drenched by a

‘ thunder-storm, and my horse and groom too, and his
‘ horse all bemired up to the middle in a cross-road.
‘ It was summer at noon, and at five we were bewin-
‘ tered; but the lightning was sent perhaps to let us
‘ know that the summer was not yet over. It is
‘ queer weather for the 27th October.

‘ Yours, &c.’

LETTER 344.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, October 29th, 1819.*

‘ Yours of the 15th came yesterday. I am sorry
‘ that you do not mention a large letter addressed to
‘ *your care* for Lady Byron, from me, at Bologna, two
‘ months ago. Pray tell me, was this letter received
‘ and forwarded?;

‘ You say nothing of the vice-consulate for the Ra-
‘ venna patrician, from which it is to be inferred that
‘ the thing will not be done.

‘ I had written about a hundred stanzas of a *Third*
‘ Canto to Don Juan, but the reception of the two
‘ first is no encouragement to you nor me to proceed.

‘ I had also written about 600 lines of a poem, the
‘ Vision (or Prophecy) of Dante, the subject a view of
‘ Italy in the ages down to the present—supposing
‘ Dante to speak in his own person, previous to his
‘ death, and embracing all topics in the way of pro-
‘ phesy, like Lycophron’s Cassandra; but this and the
‘ other are both at a stand-still for the present.

‘ I gave Moore, who is gone to Rome, my Life in
‘ MS., in 78 folio sheets, brought down to 1816. But
‘ this I put into his hands for *his* care, as he has some
‘ other MSS. of mine—a Journal kept in 1814, &c.
‘ Neither are for publication during my life, but when
‘ I am cold you may do what you please. In the

‘ mean time, if you like to read them you may, and
‘ show them to anybody you like—I care not.

‘ The Life is *Memoranda*, and not *Confessions*. I
‘ have left out all my *loves* (except in a general way),
‘ and many other of the most important things (be-
‘ cause I must not compromise other people), so that
‘ it is like the play of Hamlet—“the part of Hamlet
‘ omitted by particular desire.” But you will find
‘ many opinions, and some fun, with a detailed account
‘ of my marriage and its consequences, as true as a
‘ party concerned can make such account, for I sup-
‘ pose we are all prejudiced.

‘ I have never read over this Life since it was writ-
‘ ten, so that I know not exactly what it may repeat
‘ or contain. Moore and I passed some merry days
‘ together.

‘ I probably must return for business, or in my way
‘ to America. Pray, did you get a letter for Hobhouse,
‘ who will have told you the contents? I understand
‘ that the Venezuelan commissioners had orders to
‘ treat with emigrants; now I want to go there. I
‘ should not make a bad South-American planter, and
‘ I should take my natural daughter, Allegra, with me,
‘ and settle. I wrote, at length, to Hobhouse, to get
‘ information from Perry, who, I suppose, is the best
‘ topographer and trumpeter of the new republicans.
‘ Pray write. ‘ Yours ever.

‘ P. S. Moore and I did nothing but laugh. He
‘ will tell you of “my whereabouts,” and all my pro-
‘ ceedings at this present; they are as usual. You
‘ should not let those fellows publish false “Don
‘ Juans;” but do not put *my name*, because I mean to
‘ cut R—ts up like a gourd in the preface, if I con-
‘ tinue the poem.’

LETTER 345.

TO MR. HOPPNER.

‘ October 29th, 1819.

‘ The Ferrara story is of a piece with all the rest of
‘ the Venetian manufacture,—you may judge. I only
‘ changed horses there since I wrote to you, after my
‘ visit in June last. “*Convent*,” and “*carry off*,”
‘ quotha! and “*girl*.” I should like to know *who* has
‘ been carried off, except poor dear *me*. I have been
‘ more ravished myself than anybody since the Trojan
‘ war; but as to the arrest and its causes, one is as
‘ true as the other, and I can account for the invention
‘ of neither. I suppose it is some confusion of the
‘ tale of the F * * and of M^e. Guiccioli, and half a
‘ dozen more; but it is useless to unravel the web;
‘ when one has only to brush it away. I shall settle
‘ with Master E., who looks very blue at your *in-deci-*
‘ *sion*, and swears that he is the best arithmetician in
‘ Europe; and so I think also, for he makes out two
‘ and two to be five.

‘ You may see me next week. I have a horse or
‘ two more (five in all), and I shall repossess myself of
‘ Lido, and I will rise earlier, and we will go and shake
‘ our livers over the beach, as heretofore, if you like—
‘ and we will make the Adriatic roar again with our
‘ hatred of that now empty oyster-shell, without its
‘ pearl, the city of Venice.

‘ Murray sent me a letter yesterday: the impostors
‘ have published *two* new *Third Cantos* of *Don Juan*:
‘ —the devil take the impudence of some blackguard
‘ bookseller or other *therefor*! Perhaps I did not
‘ make myself understood; he told me the sale had
‘ been great, 1200 out of 1500 quarto, I believe (which
‘ is nothing after selling 13,000 of the *Corsair* in one
‘ day); but that the “best judges, &c.” had said it was

‘ very fine, and clever, and particularly good English,
‘ and poetry, and all those consolatory things, which
‘ are not, however, worth a single copy to a book-
‘ seller: and as to the author, of course I am in a
‘ d—ned passion at the bad taste of the times, and
‘ swear there is nothing like posterity, who, of course,
‘ must know more of the matter than their grand-
‘ fathers. There has been an eleventh commandment
‘ to the women not to read it, and, what is still more
‘ extraordinary, they seem not to have broken it. But
‘ that can be of little import to them, poor things, for
‘ the reading or non-reading a book will never * * * *.

‘ Count G. comes to Venice next week, and I am
‘ requested to consign his wife to him, which shall be
‘ done. What you say of the long evenings at the
‘ Mira, or Venice, reminds me of what Curran said to
‘ Moore:—“ So I hear you have married a pretty
‘ woman, and a very good creature, too—an excellent
‘ creature. Pray—um!—*how do you pass your even-*
‘ *ings?*” It is a devil of a question that, and perhaps
‘ as easy to answer with a wife as with a mistress.

‘ If you go to Milan, pray leave at least a *Vice-*
‘ *Consul*—the only vice that will ever be wanting in
‘ Venice. D’Orville is a good fellow. But you shall
‘ go to England in the spring with me, and plant Mrs.
‘ Hoppner at Berne with her relations for a few months.
‘ I wish you had been here (at Venice, I mean, not the
‘ Mira) when Moore was here—we were very merry
‘ and tipsy. He *hated* Venice by the way, and swore
‘ it was a sad place*.

‘ So Madame Albrizzi’s death is in danger—poor
‘ woman! Moore told me that at Geneva they had

* I beg to say that this report of my opinion of Venice is coloured somewhat too deeply by the feelings of the reporter.

‘ made a devil of a story of the Fornaretta :—“ Young
 ‘ lady seduced!—subsequent abandonment!—leap into
 ‘ the Grand Canal!”—and her being in the “ hospital
 ‘ of *fous* in consequence!” I should like to know who
 ‘ was nearest being made “*fou*,” and be d—d to them!
 ‘ Don’t you think me in the interesting character of a
 ‘ very ill-used gentleman? I hope your little boy is
 ‘ well. Allegrina is flourishing like a pomegranate
 ‘ blossom. Yours, &c.’

LETTER 346.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, November 8th, 1819.*

‘ Mr. Hoppner has lent me a copy of “ Don
 ‘ Juan,” Paris edition, which he tells me is read in
 ‘ Switzerland by clergymen and ladies with consider-
 ‘ able approbation. In the Second Canto, you must
 ‘ alter the 49th stanza to

‘ ‘Twas twilight, and the sunless day went down
 ‘ Over the waste of waters, like a veil
 ‘ Which if withdrawn would but disclose the frown
 ‘ Of one whose hate is mask’d but to assail;
 ‘ Thus to their hopeless eyes the night was shown,
 ‘ And grimly darkled o’er their faces pale
 ‘ And the dim desolate deep; twelve days had Fear
 ‘ Been their familiar, and now Death was here.

‘ I have been ill these eight days with a tertian
 ‘ fever, caught in the country on horseback in a thun-
 ‘ der-storm. Yesterday I had the fourth attack: the
 ‘ two last were very smart, the first day as well as the
 ‘ last being preceded by vomiting. It is the fever of
 ‘ the place and the season. I feel weakened, but not
 ‘ unwell, in the intervals, except headache and lassi-
 ‘ tude.

‘ Count Guiccioli has arrived in Venice, and has
 ‘ presented his spouse (who had preceded him two

‘ months for her health and the prescriptions of Dr.
‘ Aglietti) with a paper of conditions, regulations of
‘ hours and conduct, and morals, &c. &c. &c., which he
‘ insists on her accepting, and she persists in refusing.
‘ I am expressly, it should seem, excluded by this
‘ treaty, as an indispensable preliminary; so that they
‘ are in high dissension, and what the result may be I
‘ know not, particularly as they are consulting friends.

‘ To-night, as Countess Guiccioli observed me
‘ poring over “Don Juan,” she stumbled by mere
‘ chance on the 137th stanza of the First Canto, and
‘ asked me what it meant. I told her, “Nothing—but
‘ “your husband is coming.”” As I said this in Italian,
‘ with some emphasis, she started up in a fright, and
‘ said, “*Oh, my God, is he coming?*” thinking it was
‘ *her own*, who either was or ought to have been at
‘ the theatre. You may suppose we laughed when she
‘ found out the mistake. You will be amused, as I
‘ was;—it happened not three hours ago.

‘ I wrote to you last week, but have added nothing
‘ to the third Canto since my fever, nor to “The Pro-
‘ phecy of Dante.” Of the former there are about 100
‘ octaves done; of the latter about 500 lines—perhaps
‘ more. Moore saw the third Juan, as far as it then
‘ went. I do not know if my fever will let me go on
‘ with either, and the tertian lasts, they say, a good
‘ while. I had it in Malta on my way home, and the
‘ malaria fever in Greece the year before that. The
‘ Venetian is not very fierce, but I was delirious one of
‘ the nights with it, for an hour or two, and, on my
‘ senses coming back, found Fletcher sobbing on one
‘ side of the bed, and La Contessa Guiccioli * weeping

* The following curious particulars of his delirium are given by Madame Guiccioli:—‘ At the beginning of winter Count Guiccioli came

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1

Trans. by M. W. Turner B. A.

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Mr. A. C. H. A.

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‘ on the other; so that I had no want of attendance.
‘ I have not yet taken any physician, because, though
‘ I think they may relieve in chronic disorders, such
‘ as gout and the like, &c. &c. &c. (though they can’t
‘ cure them)—just as surgeons are necessary to set
‘ bones and tend wounds—yet I think fevers quite
‘ out of their reach, and remediable only by diet and
‘ nature.

‘ I don’t like the taste of bark, but I suppose that I
‘ must take it soon.

‘ Tell Rose that somebody at Milan (an Austrian,
‘ Mr. Hoppner says) is answering his book. . William
‘ Bankes is in quarantine at Trieste. I have not lately
‘ heard from you. Excuse this paper: it is long paper
‘ shortened for the occasion. What folly is this of
‘ Carlile’s trial? why let him have the honours of a
‘ martyr? it will only advertise the books in question.

‘ Yours, &c.

‘ P.S. As I tell you that the Guiccioli business is

‘ from Ravenna to fetch me. When he arrived, Lord Byron was ill of a
‘ fever, occasioned by his having got wet through;—a violent storm
‘ having surprised him while taking his usual exercise on horseback.
‘ He had been delirious the whole night, and I had watched continually
‘ by his bedside. During his delirium he composed a good many verses,
‘ and ordered his servant to write them down from his dictation. The
‘ rhythm of these verses was quite correct, and the poetry itself had no
‘ appearance of being the work of a delirious mind. He preserved them
‘ for some time after he got well, and then burned them.’—‘ Sul comin-
‘ ciare dell’ inverno il Conte Guiccioli venne a prendermi per ricondurmi
‘ a Ravenna. Quando egli giunse Ld. Byron era ammalato di febbri
‘ prese per essersi bagnato avendolo sorpreso un forte temporale mentre
‘ faceva l’usato suo esercizio a cavallo. Egli aveva delirato tutta la
‘ notte, ed io aveva sempre vegliato presso al suo letto. Nel suo delirio
‘ egli compose molti versi che ordinò al suo domestico di scrivere sotto la
‘ sua dittatura. La misura dei versi era esatissima, e la poesia pure non
‘ pareva opera di una mente in delirio. Egli la conservò lungo tempo
‘ dopo restabilito—poi l’abbruciò.’

I have been informed, too, that, during his ravings at this time, he was constantly haunted by the idea of his mother-in-law,—taking every one that came near him for her, and reproaching those about him for letting her enter his room.

‘ on the eve of exploding in one way or the other, I will
‘ just add that, without attempting to influence the
‘ decision of the Contessa, a good deal depends upon
‘ it. If she and her husband make it up, you will
‘ perhaps see me in England sooner than you expect.
‘ If not, I shall retire with her to France or America,
‘ change my name, and lead a quiet provincial life.
‘ All this may seem odd, but I have got the poor girl
‘ into a scrape ; and as neither her birth, nor her rank,
‘ nor her connexions by birth or marriage are inferior
‘ to my own, I am in honour bound to support her
‘ through. Besides, she is very a pretty woman—ask
‘ Moore—and not yet one and twenty.

‘ If she gets over this and I get over my tertian, I
‘ will perhaps look in at Albemarle-street, some of
‘ these days, *en passant* to Bolivar.’

LETTER 347.

TO MR. BANKES.

‘ *Venice, November 20th, 1819.*

‘ A tertian ague which has troubled me for some
‘ time, and the indisposition of my daughter, have
‘ prevented me from replying before to your welcome
‘ letter. I have not been ignorant of your progress
‘ nor of your discoveries, and I trust that you are no
‘ worse in health from your labours. You may rely
‘ upon finding everybody in England eager to reap
‘ the fruits of them ; and as you have done more than
‘ other men, I hope you will not limit yourself to saying
‘ less than may do justice to the talents and time you
‘ have bestowed on your perilous researches. The
‘ first sentence of my letter will have explained to you
‘ why I cannot join you at Trieste. I was on the point
‘ of setting out for England (before I knew of your

‘ arrival) when my child’s illness has made her and
 ‘ me dependant on a Venetian Proto-Medico.

‘ It is now seven years since you and I met;—
 ‘ which time you have employed better for others
 ‘ and more honourably for yourself than I have done.

‘ In England you will find considerable changes
 ‘ public and private,—you will see some of our old
 ‘ college cotemporaries turned into lords of the trea-
 ‘ sury, admiralty, and the like,—others become re-
 ‘ formers and orators,—many settled in life, as it is
 ‘ called,—and others settled in death; among the lat-
 ‘ ter (by the way, not our fellow collegians), Sheridan,
 ‘ Curran, Lady Melbourne, Monk Lewis, Frederick
 ‘ Douglas, &c. &c. &c.; but you will still find Mr. * *
 ‘ living and all his family, as also * * * * *

Should you come up this way, and I am still here,
 ‘ you need not be assured how glad I shall be to see
 ‘ you; I long to hear some part from you, of that
 ‘ which I expect in no long time to see. At length
 ‘ you have had better fortune than any traveller of
 ‘ equal enterprise (except Humboldt), in returning
 ‘ safe; and after the fate of the Brownes, and the
 ‘ Parkes, and the Burckhardts, it is hardly less surprise
 ‘ than satisfaction to get you back again.

‘ Believe me ever

‘ And very affectionately yours,
 ‘ BYRON.’

LETTER 348.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, December 4th, 1819.*

‘ You may do as you please, but you are about a
 ‘ hopeless experiment. Eldon will decide against you,
 ‘ were it only that my name is in the record. You
 ‘ will also recollect that if the publication is pro-

‘ nounced against, on the grounds you mention, as
‘ *indecent and blasphemous*, that I lose all right in my
‘ daughter’s *guardianship* and *education*, in short, all
‘ paternal authority, and everything concerning her,
‘ except * * * * *

‘ It was so decided in Shelley’s case, because he had
‘ written *Queen Mab*, &c. &c. However, you can ask
‘ the lawyers, and do as you like: I do not inhibit
‘ you trying the question; I merely state one of the
‘ consequences to me. With regard to the copyright,
‘ it is hard that you should pay for a nonentity: I will
‘ therefore refund it, which I can very well do, not
‘ having spent it, nor begun upon it; and so we will
‘ be quits on that score. It lies at my banker’s.

‘ Of the Chancellor’s law I am no judge; but take
‘ up *Tom Jones*, and read his *Mrs. Waters* and *Molly*
‘ *Seagrim*; or *Prior’s Hans Carvel* and *Paulo Pur-*
‘ *ganti*: *Smollett’s Roderick Random*, the chapter of
‘ *Lord Strutwell*, and many others; *Peregrine Pickle*,
‘ the scene of the *Beggar Girl*; *Johnson’s London*, for
‘ coarse expressions; for instance, the words “* *,”
‘ and “* *;” *Anstey’s Bath Guide*, the “*Hearken,*
‘ *Lady Betty, hearken*;”—take up, in short, *Pope*,
‘ *Prior*, *Congreve*, *Dryden*, *Fielding*, *Smollett*, and let
‘ the Counsel select passages, and what becomes of
‘ *their* copyright, if his *Wat Tyler* decision is to pass
‘ into a precedent? I have nothing more to say: you
‘ must judge for yourselves.

‘ I wrote to you some time ago. I have had a tertian
‘ ague; my daughter *Allegra* has been ill also, and I
‘ have been almost obliged to run away with a married
‘ woman; but with some difficulty, and many internal
‘ struggles, I reconciled the lady with her lord, and
‘ cured the fever of the child with bark, and my own

‘ with cold water. I think of setting out for England
‘ by the Tyrol in a few days, so that I could wish you
‘ to direct your next letter to Calais. Excuse my
‘ writing in great haste and late in the morning, or
‘ night, whichever you please to call it. The Third
‘ Canto of “Don Juan” is completed, in about two
‘ hundred stanzas; very decent, I believe, but do not
‘ know, and it is useless to discuss until it be ascer-
‘ tained if it may or may not be a property.

‘ My present determination to quit Italy was un-
‘ looked for; but I have explained the reasons in let-
‘ ters to my sister and Douglas Kinnaird, a week or
‘ two ago. My progress will depend upon the snows
‘ of the Tyrol, and the health of my child, who is at
‘ present quite recovered; but I hope to get on well,
‘ and am

‘ Yours ever and truly.

‘ P.S. Many thanks for your letters, to which you
‘ are not to consider this as an answer, but as an ac-
‘ knowledgment.’

The struggle which, at the time of my visit to him, I had found Lord Byron so well disposed to make towards averting, as far as now lay in his power, some of the mischievous consequences which, both to the object of his attachment and himself, were likely to result from their connexion, had been brought, as the foregoing letters show, to a crisis soon after I left him. The Count Guiccioli, on his arrival at Venice, insisted, as we have seen, that his lady should return with him; and, after some conjugal negotiations, in which Lord Byron does not appear to have interfered, the young Contessa consented reluctantly to accompany her lord to Ravenna, it being first covenanted that, in

future, all communication between her and her lover should cease.

‘ In a few days after this,’ says Mr. Hoppner, in some notices of his noble friend with which he has favoured me, ‘ he returned to Venice, very much out of spirits, owing to Madame Guiccioli’s departure, and out of humour with everybody and everything around him. We resumed our rides at the Lido, and I did my best not only to raise his spirits, but to make him forget his absent mistress, and to keep him to his purpose of returning to England. He went into no society, and having no longer any relish for his former occupation, his time, when he was not writing, hung heavy enough on hand.’

The promise given by the lovers not to correspond was, as all parties must have foreseen, soon violated; and the letters Lord Byron addressed to the lady, at this time, though written in a language not his own, are rendered frequently even eloquent by the mere force of the feeling that governed him—a feeling which could not have owed its fuel to fancy alone, since now that reality had been so long substituted, it still burned on. From one of these letters, dated November 25th, I shall so far presume upon the discretionary power vested in me, as to lay a short extract or two before the reader—not merely as matters of curiosity, but on account of the strong evidence they afford of the struggle between passion and a sense of right that now agitated him.

‘ You are,’ he says, ‘ and ever will be, my first thought. But, at this moment, I am in a state most dreadful, not knowing which way to decide;—on the one hand, fearing that I should compromise you for ever, by my return to Ravenna and the consequences

‘ of such a step, and, on the other, dreading that I shall
 ‘ lose both you and myself, and all that I have ever
 ‘ known or tasted of happiness, by never seeing you
 ‘ more. I pray of you, I implore you to be comforted,
 ‘ and to believe that I cannot cease to love you but
 ‘ with my life*.’ In another part he says, ‘ I go to
 ‘ save you, and leave a country insupportable to me
 ‘ without you. Your letters to F * * and myself do
 ‘ wrong to my motives—but you will yet see your in-
 ‘ justice. It is not enough that I must leave you—
 ‘ from motives of which ere long you will be convinced
 ‘ —it is not enough that I must fly from Italy, with a
 ‘ heart deeply wounded, after having passed all my
 ‘ days in solitude since your departure, sick both in
 ‘ body and mind—but I must also have to endure your
 ‘ reproaches without answering and without deserving
 ‘ them. Farewell!—in that one word is comprised
 ‘ the death of my happiness†.’

He had now arranged everything for his departure for England, and had even fixed the day, when ac-

* ‘ Tu sei, e sarai sempre mio primo pensier. Ma in questo momento sono in un’ stato orribile non sapendo cosa decidere;—temendo, da una parte, comprometterti in eterno col mio ritorno a Ravenna, e colle sue conseguenze; e, ‘dal’ altra perderti, e me stesso, e tutto quel che ho conosciuto o gustato di felicità, nel non vederti più. Ti prego, ti supplico calmarti, e credere che non posso cessare ad amarti che colla vita.’

† ‘ Io parto, per *salvarti*, e lascio un paese divenuto insopportabile senza di te. Le tue lettere alla F * *, ed anche a me stesso fanno torto ai miei motivi; ma col tempo vedrai la tua ingiustizia. Tu parli del dolor—io lo sento, ma mi mancano le parole. Non basta lasciarti per dei motivi dei quali tu eri persuasa (non molto tempo fa)—non basta partire dall’ Italia col cuore lacerato, dopo aver passato tutti i giorni dopo la tua partenza nella solitudine, ammalato di corpo e di anima—ma ho anche a sopportare i tuoi rimproveri, senza replicarti, e senza meritargli. Addio—in quella parola è compresa la morte di mia felicità.’

The close of this last sentence exhibits one of the very few instances of incorrectness that Lord Byron falls into in these letters;—the proper construction being ‘*della mia felicità*.’

counts reached him from Ravenna that the Contessa was alarmingly ill;—her sorrow at their separation having so much preyed upon her mind, that even her own family, fearful of the consequences, had withdrawn all opposition to her wishes, and now, with the sanction of Count Guiccioli himself, entreated her lover to hasten to Ravenna. What was he, in this dilemma, to do? Already had he announced his coming to different friends in England, and every dictate, he felt, of prudence and manly fortitude urged his departure. While thus balancing between duty and inclination, the day appointed for his setting out arrived; and the following picture, from the life, of his irresolution on the occasion, is from a letter written by a female friend of Madame Guiccioli, who was present at the scene. ‘He was ready dressed for the journey, his gloves and cap on, and even his little cane in his hand. Nothing was now waited for but his coming down stairs,—his boxes being already all on board the gondola. At this moment, my lord, by way of pretext, declares, that if it should strike one o’clock before every thing was in order (his arms being the only thing not yet quite ready), he would not go that day. The hour strikes, and he remains *!’

The writer adds, ‘it is evident he has not the heart to go;’ and the result proved that she had not judged him wrongly. The very next day’s tidings from Ravenna decided his fate, and he himself, in a letter to

* ‘Egli era tutto vestito di viaggio coi guanti fra le mani, col suo bonnet, e persino colla piccola sua canna; non altro aspettavasi che egli scendesse le scale, tutti i bauli erano in barca. Milord fa la pretesta che se suona un ora dopo il mezzodi e che non sia ogni cosa all’ordine (poichè le armi sole non erano in pronto) egli non partirebbe più per quel giorno. L’ora suona ed egli resta.’

the Contessa, thus announces the triumph which she had achieved. ‘F*** will already have told you, with her accustomed sublimity, that Love has gained the victory. I could not summon up resolution enough to leave the country where you are, without, at least, once more seeing you. On *yourself*, perhaps, it will depend, whether I ever again shall leave you. Of the rest we shall speak when we meet. You ought, by this time, to know which is most conducive to your welfare, my presence or my absence. For myself, I am a citizen of the world—all countries are alike to me. You have ever been, since our first acquaintance, *the sole object of my thoughts*. My opinion was, that the best course I could adopt, both for your peace and that of all your family, would have been to depart and go far, *far* away from you;—since to have been near and not approach you would have been, for me, impossible. You have however decided that I am to return to Vienna. I shall accordingly return—and shall *do*—and *be* all that you wish. I cannot say more*.’

On quitting Venice he took leave of Mr. Hoppner in a short but cordial letter, which I cannot better introduce than by prefixing to it the few words of comment with which this excellent friend of the noble poet has himself accompanied it. ‘I need not say with

* ‘La F** ti avra detta, *colla sua solita sublimità*, che l’Amor ha vinto. Io non ho potuto trovare forza di anima per lasciare il paese dove tu sei, senza vederti almeno un’altra volta:—forse dipenderà da te se mai ti lascio più. Per il resto parleremo. Tu dovresti adesso sapere cosa sarà più convenevole al tuo ben essere la mia presenza o la mia lontananza. Io sono cittadino del mondo—tutti i paesi sono eguali per me. Tu sei stata sempre (dopo che ci siamo conosciuti) *l’unico oggetto di miei pensieri*. Credeva che il miglior partito per la pace tua e la pace di tua famiglia fosse il mio partire, e andare ben *lontano*; poichè stare vicino e *non* avvicinarti sarebbe per me impossibile. Ma tu hai deciso che io debbo ritornare a Ravenna—tornaro—e farò—e sarò ciò che tu vuoi. Non posso dirti di più.’

‘ what painful feeling I witnessed the departure of a
‘ person who, from the first day of our acquaintance,
‘ had treated me with unvaried kindness, reposing a
‘ confidence in me which it was beyond the power of
‘ my utmost efforts to deserve; admitting me to an
‘ intimacy which I had no right to claim, and listening
‘ with patience, and the greatest good temper, to the
‘ remonstrances I ventured to make upon his conduct.’

LETTER 349.

TO MR. HOPPNER.

‘ My dear Hoppner,

‘ Partings are but bitter work at best, so that I
‘ shall not venture on a second with you. Pray make
‘ my respects to Mrs. Hoppner, and assure her of my
‘ unalterable reverence for the singular goodness of
‘ her disposition, which is not without its reward even
‘ in this world—for those who are no great believers
‘ in human virtues would discover enough in her to
‘ give them a better opinion of their fellow-creatures
‘ and—what is still more difficult—of themselves, as
‘ being of the same species, however inferior in ap-
‘ proaching its nobler models. Make, too, what
‘ excuses you can for my omission of the ceremony of
‘ leave-taking. If we all meet again, I will make my
‘ humblest apology; if not, recollect that I wished you
‘ all well; and, if you can, forget that I have given
‘ you a great deal of trouble. Yours, &c. &c.’

LETTER 350.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Venice, December 10th, 1819.*

‘ Since I last wrote, I have changed my mind, and
‘ shall not come to England. The more I contemplate,
‘ the more I dislike the place and the prospect. You
‘ may therefore address to me as usual *here*, though I

‘ mean to go to another city. I have finished the
‘ Third Canto of Don Juan, but the things I have read
‘ and heard discourage all further publication—at least
‘ for the present. You may try the copy question, but
‘ you’ll lose it: the cry is up, and cant is up. I should
‘ have no objection to return the price of the copyright,
‘ and have written to Mr. Kinnaird by this post on the
‘ subject. Talk with him.

‘ I have not the patience, nor do I feel interest
‘ enough in the question, to contend with the fellows
‘ in their own slang; but I perceive Mr. Blackwood’s
‘ Magazine and one or two others of your missives have
‘ been hyperbolical in their praise, and diabolical in
‘ their abuse. I like and admire W**n, and *he*
‘ should not have indulged himself in such outrageous
‘ licence*. It is overdone and defeats itself. What
‘ would he say to the grossness without passion and
‘ the misanthropy without feeling of Gulliver’s Tra-
‘ vels?—When he talks of Lady Byron’s business, he
‘ talks of what he knows nothing about; and you may
‘ tell him that no one can more desire a public investi-
‘ gation of that affair than I do.

‘ I sent home by Moore (*for* Moore only, who has
‘ my Journal also) my Memoir written up to 1816, and
‘ I gave him leave to show it to whom he pleased, but
‘ *not to publish*, on any account. You may read it, and
‘ you may let W**n read it, if he likes—not for his
‘ *public* opinion, but his private; for I like the man,
‘ and care very little about his magazine. And I

* This is one of the many mistakes into which his distance from the scene of literary operations led him. The gentleman, to whom the hostile article in the Magazine is here attributed, has never, either then or since, written upon the subject of the noble poet’s character or genius, without giving vent to a feeling of admiration as enthusiastic as it is always eloquently and powerfully expressed.

‘ could wish Lady B. herself to read it, that she may
‘ have it in her power to mark anything mistaken or
‘ misstated ; as it may probably appear after my extinc-
‘ tion, and it would be but fair she should see it,—that
‘ is to say, herself willing.

‘ Perhaps I may take a journey to you in the spring ;
‘ but I *have* been ill and *am* indolent and indecisive,
‘ because few things interest me. These fellows first
‘ abused me for being gloomy, and now they are wroth
‘ that I am, or attempted to be, facetious. I have got
‘ such a cold and headache that I can hardly see what
‘ I scrawl :—the winters here are as sharp as needles.
‘ Some time ago, I wrote to you rather fully about my
‘ Italian affairs ; at present I can say no more except
‘ that you shall hear further by and by.

‘ Your Blackwood accuses me of treating women
‘ harshly : it may be so, but I have been their martyr ;
‘ my whole life has been sacrificed *to* them and *by* them.
‘ I mean to leave Venice in a few days, but you will
‘ address your letters *here* as usual. When I fix else-
‘ where, you shall know.’

Soon after this letter to Mr. Murray he set out for Ravenna, from which place we shall find his correspondence for the next year and a half dated. For a short time after his arrival, he took up his residence at an inn ; but the Count Guiccioli having allowed him to hire a suite of apartments in the Palazzo Guiccioli itself, he was once more lodged under the same roof with his mistress.

LETTER 351.

TO MR. HOPPNER.

‘ *Ravenna, Dec. 31st, 1819.*

‘ I have been here this week, and was obliged to
‘ put on my armour and go the night after my arrival

‘ to the Marquis Cavalli’s, where there were between
‘ two and three hundred of the best company I have
‘ seen in Italy,—more beauty, more youth, and more
‘ diamonds among the women than have been seen
‘ these fifty years in the Sea-Sodom*. I never saw
‘ such a difference between two places of the same
‘ latitude (or *platitude*, it is all one),—music, dancing,
‘ and play, all in the same *salle*. The G.’s object
‘ appeared to be to parade her foreign lover as much
‘ as possible, and, faith, if she seemed to glory in the
‘ scandal, it was not for me to be ashamed of it.
‘ Nobody seemed surprised;—all the women, on the
‘ contrary, were, as it were, delighted with the excel-
‘ lent example. The vice-legate, and all the other
‘ vices, were as polite as could be;—and I, who had
‘ acted on the reserve, was fairly obliged to take the
‘ lady under my arm, and look as much like a *cicisbeo*
‘ as I could on so short a notice,—to say nothing of
‘ the embarrassment of a cocked hat and sword, much
‘ more formidable to me than ever it will be to the
‘ enemy.

‘ I write in great haste—do you answer as hastily.
‘ I can understand nothing of all this; but it seems as
‘ if the G. had been presumed to be *planted*, and was
‘ determined to show that she was not,—*plantation*, in
‘ this hemisphere, being the greatest moral misfortune.
‘ But this is mere conjecture, for I know nothing
‘ about it—except that everybody are very kind to
‘ her, and not discourteous to me. Fathers, and all
‘ relations, quite agreeable.

‘ Yours ever,

‘ B.

‘ P. S. Best respects to Mrs. H.

* ‘ Gehenna of the waters! thou Sea-Sodom!’

MARINO FALIERO.

‘ I would send the *compliments* of the season; but
 ‘ the season itself is so complimentary with snow and
 ‘ rain that I wait for sunshine.”

LETTER 352.

TO MR. MOORE.

January 2d, 1820.

‘ My dear Moore,

‘ “ To-day it is my wedding day
 ‘ And all the folks would stare
 ‘ If wife should dine at Edmonton,
 ‘ And I should dine at Ware.”

Or *thus*,

‘ Here’s a happy new year! but with reason,
 ‘ I beg you’ll permit me to say—
 ‘ Wish me *many* returns of the *season*,
 ‘ But as *few* as you please of the *day*.

‘ My this present writing is to direct you that, *if*
 ‘ *she chooses*, she may see the MS. Memoir in your
 ‘ possession. I wish her to have fair play, in all cases,
 ‘ even though it will not be published till after my
 ‘ decease. For this purpose, it were but just that
 ‘ Lady B. should know what is there said of her and
 ‘ hers, that she may have full power to remark on or
 ‘ respond to any part or parts, as may seem fitting to
 ‘ herself. This is fair dealing, I presume, in all
 ‘ events.

‘ To change the subject, are you in England? I
 ‘ send you an epitaph for Castlereagh. * * * * *
 Another for Pitt—

‘ With death doom’d to grapple
 ‘ Beneath this cold slab, he
 ‘ Who lied in the Chapel
 ‘ Now lies in the Abbey.

‘ The gods seem to have made me poetical this
 ‘ day:—

‘ In digging up your bones, Tom Paine,
‘ Will. Cobbett has done well:
‘ You visit him on earth again,
‘ He’ll visit you in hell.

Or

‘ You come to him on earth again,
‘ He’ll go with you to hell.

‘ Pray let not these versiculi go forth with *my* name,
‘ except among the initiated, because my friend H.
‘ has foamed into a reformer, and, I greatly fear, will
‘ subside into Newgate ; since the Honourable House,
‘ according to Galignani’s Reports of Parliamentary
‘ Debates, are menacing a prosecution to a pamphlet
‘ of his. I shall be very sorry to hear of anything but
‘ good for him, particularly in these miserable squab-
‘ bles ; but these are the natural effects of taking a
‘ part in them.

‘ For my own part, I had a sad scene since you
‘ went. Count Gu. came for his wife, and *none* of
‘ those consequences which Scott prophesied ensued.
‘ There was no damages, as in England, and so Scott
‘ lost his wager. But there was a great scene, for she
‘ would not, at first, go back with him—at least, she
‘ *did* go back with him; but he insisted, reasonably
‘ enough, that all communication should be broken
‘ off between her and me. So, finding Italy very
‘ dull, and having a fever tertian, I packed up my
‘ valise, and prepared to cross the Alps ; but my
‘ daughter fell ill, and detained me.

‘ After her arrival at Ravenna, the Guiccioli fell ill
‘ again too ; and, at last, her father (who had, all
‘ along, opposed the liaison most violently till now)
‘ wrote to me to say that she was in such a state that
‘ *he* begged me to come and see her,—and that her
‘ husband had acquiesced, in consequence of her

‘ relapse, and that *he* (her father) would guarantee all
‘ this, and that there would be no farther scenes in
‘ consequence between them, and that I should not be
‘ compromised in any way. I set out soon after, and
‘ have been here ever since. I found her a good deal
‘ altered, but getting better:—*all* this comes of read-
‘ ing Corinna.

‘ The Carnival is about to begin, and I saw about
‘ two or three hundred people at the Marquis Cavalli’s
‘ the other evening, with as much youth, beauty, and
‘ diamonds among the women, as ever averaged in the
‘ like number. My appearance in waiting on the
‘ Guiccioli was considered as a thing of course. The
‘ marquis is her uncle, and naturally considered me as
‘ her relation.

‘ The paper is out, and so is the letter. Pray write.
‘ Address to Venice, whence the letters will be for-
‘ warded. Yours, &c. ‘ B.’

LETTER 353.

TO MR. HOPPNER.

‘ *Ravenna, January 20th, 1820.*

‘ I have not decided anything about remaining at
‘ Ravenna. I may stay a day, a week, a year, all my
‘ life; but all this depends upon what I can neither
‘ see nor foresee. I came because I was called, and
‘ will go the moment that I perceive what may render
‘ my departure proper. My attachment has neither
‘ the blindness of the beginning, nor the microscopic
‘ accuracy of the close to such liaisons; but “time
‘ and the hour” must decide upon what I do. I can
‘ as yet say nothing, because I hardly know anything
‘ beyond what I have told you.

‘ I wrote to you last post for my moveables, as there
‘ is no getting a lodging with a chair or table here

‘ ready ; and as I have already some things of the sort
‘ at Bologna which I had last summer there for my
‘ daughter, I have directed them to be moved ; and
‘ wish the like to be done with those of Venice, that I
‘ may at least get out of the “ Albergo Imperiale,”
‘ which is *imperial* in all true sense of the epithet.
‘ Buffini may be paid for his poison. I forgot to
‘ thank you and Mrs. Hoppner for a whole treasure of
‘ toys for Allegra before our departure ; it was very
‘ kind, and we are very grateful.

‘ Your account of the weeding of the Governor’s
‘ party is very entertaining. If you do not understand
‘ the consular exceptions, I do ; and it is right that a
‘ man of honour, and a woman of probity, should find
‘ it so, particularly in a place where there are not
‘ “ ten righteous.” As to nobility—in England none
‘ are strictly noble but peers, not even peers’ sons,
‘ though titled by courtesy ; nor knights of the garter,
‘ unless of the peerage, so that Castlereagh himself
‘ would hardly pass through a foreign herald’s ordeal
‘ till the death of his father.

‘ The snow is a foot deep here. There is a theatre,
‘ and opera,—the Barber of Seville. Balls begin on
‘ Monday next. Pay the porter for never looking after
‘ the gate, and ship my chattels, and let me know, or
‘ let Castelli let me know, how my lawsuits go on—
‘ but fee him only in proportion to his success. Per-
‘ haps we may meet in the spring yet, if you are for
‘ England. I see H * * has got into a scrape, which
‘ does not please me ; he should not have gone so deep
‘ among those men, without calculating the conse-
‘ quences. I used to think myself the most imprudent
‘ of all among my friends and acquaintances, but
‘ almost begin to doubt it. ‘ Yours, &c.’

LETTER 354.

TO MR. HOPPNER.

‘ *Ravenna, January 31st, 1820.*

‘ You would hardly have been troubled with the
‘ removal of my furniture, but there is none to be had
‘ nearer than Bologna, and I have been fain to have
‘ that of the rooms which I fitted up for my daughter
‘ there in the summer removed here. The expense will
‘ be at least as great of the land carriage, so that you
‘ see it was necessity, and not choice. Here they get
‘ everything from Bologna, except some lighter arti-
‘ cles from Forli or Faenza.

‘ If Scott is returned, pray remember me to him,
‘ and plead laziness the whole and sole cause of my
‘ not replying:—dreadful is the exertion of letter-
‘ writing. The Carnival here is less boisterous, but
‘ we have balls and a theatre. I carried Bankes to
‘ both, and he carried away, I believe, a much more
‘ favourable impression of the society here than of that
‘ of Venice,—recollect that I speak of the *native*
‘ society only.

‘ I am drilling very hard to learn how to double a
‘ shawl, and should succeed to admiration if I did not
‘ always double it the wrong side out; and then I
‘ sometimes confuse and bring away two, so as to put
‘ all the *Servanti* out, besides keeping their *Servite* in
‘ the cold till everybody can get back their property.
‘ But it is a dreadfully moral place, for you must not
‘ look at anybody’s wife except your neighbour’s,—if
‘ you go to the next door but one, you are scolded, and
‘ presumed to be perfidious. And then a *relazione* or
‘ an *amicizia* seems to be a regular affair of from five
‘ to fifteen years, at which period, if there occur a
‘ widowhood, it finishes by a *sposalizio*; and in the

‘ mean time it has so many rules of its own that it is
 ‘ not much better. A man actually becomes a piece
 ‘ of female property,—they won’t let their Serventi
 ‘ marry until there is a vacancy for themselves. I
 ‘ know two instances of this in one family here.

‘ To-night there was a ——* Lottery after the
 ‘ opera; it is an odd ceremony. Banks and I took
 ‘ tickets of it, and buffooned together very merrily.
 ‘ He is gone to Firenze. Mrs. J * * should have sent
 ‘ you my postscript; there was no occasion to have
 ‘ bored you in person. I never interfere in anybody’s
 ‘ squabbles,—she may scratch your face herself.

‘ The weather here has been dreadful—snow several
 ‘ feet—a *fiume* broke down a bridge, and flooded
 ‘ heaven knows how many *campi*; then rain came—
 ‘ and it is still thawing—so that my saddle-horses have
 ‘ a sinecure till the roads become more practicable.
 ‘ Why did Lega give away the goat? a blockhead—
 ‘ I must have him again.

‘ Will you pay Missiaglia and the Buffo Buffini of
 ‘ the Gran Bretagna? I heard from Moore, who is at
 ‘ Paris; I had previously written to him in London,
 ‘ but he has not yet got my letter, apparently.

‘ Believe me, &c.’

LETTER 355.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ Ravenna, February 7th, 1820.

‘ I have had no letter from you these two months;
 ‘ but since I came here in December, 1819, I sent you
 ‘ a letter for Moore, who is God knows *where*—in
 ‘ Paris or London, I presume. I have copied and cut
 ‘ the Third Canto of Don Juan *into two*, because it
 ‘ was too long; and I tell you this beforehand, because

* The word here, being under the seal, is illegible.

‘ in case of any reckoning between you and me, these
‘ two are only to go for *one*, as this was the original
‘ form, and, in fact, the two together are not longer
‘ than one of the first: so remember that I have not
‘ made this division to *double* upon *you*; but merely to
‘ suppress some tediousness in the aspect of the thing.
‘ I should have served you a pretty trick if I had sent
‘ you, for example, cantos of 50 stanzas each.

‘ I am translating the First Canto of Pulci’s *Morgante Maggiore*, and have half done it; but these
‘ last days of the Carnival confuse and interrupt every
‘ thing.

‘ I have not yet sent off the Cantos, and have some
‘ doubt whether they ought to be published, for they
‘ have not the spirit of the first. The outcry has not
‘ frightened but it has *hurt* me, and I have not written
‘ *con amore* this time. It is very decent, however,
‘ and as dull as “ the last new comedy.”

‘ I think my translations of Pulci will make you stare.
‘ It must be put by the original, stanza for stanza, and
‘ verse for verse; and you will see what was permitted
‘ in a catholic country and a bigoted age to a church-
‘ man, on the score of religion;—and so tell those
‘ buffoons who accuse me of attacking the Liturgy.

‘ I write in the greatest haste, it being the hour of
‘ the Corso, and I must go and buffoon with the rest.
‘ My daughter Allegra is just gone with the Countess
‘ G. in Count G.’s coach and six, to join the cavalcade,
‘ and I must follow with all the rest of the Ravenna
‘ world. Our old Cardinal is dead, and the new one
‘ not appointed yet; but the masquing goes on the
‘ same, the vice-legatè being a good governor. We
‘ have had hideous frost and snow, but all is mild
‘ again.

‘ Yours, &c.’

LETTER 356.

TO MR. BANKES.

‘ Ravenna, February 19th, 1820.

‘ I have room for you in the house here, as I had
‘ in Venice, if you think fit to make use of it; but do
‘ not expect to find the same gorgeous suite of tapes-
‘ tried halls. Neither dangers nor tropical heats have
‘ ever prevented your penetrating wherever you had a
‘ mind to it, and why should the snow now?—Italian
‘ snow—fie on it!—so pray come. Tita’s heart yearns
‘ for you, and mayhap for your silver broad pieces;
‘ and your playfellow, the monkey, is alone and incon-
‘ solable.

‘ I forget whether you admire or tolerate red hair,
‘ so that I rather dread showing you all that I have
‘ about me and around me in this city. Come, never-
‘ theless,—you can pay Dante a morning visit, and I
‘ will undertake that Theodore and Honoria will be
‘ most happy to see you in the forest hard by. We
‘ Goths, also, of Ravenna hope you will not despise
‘ our arch-Goth, Theodoric. I must leave it to these
‘ worthies to entertain you all the fore part of the day,
‘ seeing that I have none at all myself—the lark, that
‘ rouses me from my slumbers, being an afternoon bird.
‘ But, then, all your evenings, and as much as you can
‘ give me of your nights, will be mine. Ay! and you
‘ will find me eating flesh, too, like yourself or any
‘ other cannibal, except it be upon Fridays. Then,
‘ there are more Cantos (and be d—d to them) of what
‘ the courteous reader, Mr. S——, calls Grub-street,
‘ in my drawer, which I have a little scheme to
‘ commit to your charge for England; only I must
‘ first cut up (or cut down) two aforesaid Cantos into
‘ three, because I am grown base and mercenary, and
‘ it is an ill precedent to let my Mecænas, Murray, get

‘ too much for his money. I am busy, also, with Pulci
‘ —translating—servilely translating, stanza for stanza,
‘ and line for line—two octaves every night,—the
‘ same allowance as at Venice.

‘ Would you call at your banker’s at Bologna, and
‘ ask him for some letters lying there for me, and
‘ burn them?—or I will—so do not burn them, but
‘ bring them,—and believe me ever and very affec-
‘ tionately

‘ Yours,

‘ BYRON.

‘ P.S. I have a particular wish to hear from your-
‘ self something about Cyprus, so pray recollect all
‘ that you can.—Good night.’

LETTER 357.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Ravenna, February 21st, 1820.*

‘ The bull-dogs will be very agreeable. I have
‘ only those of this country, who, though good, have
‘ not the tenacity of tooth and stoicism in endurance
‘ of my canine fellow-citizens: then pray send them
‘ by the readiest conveyance—perhaps best by sea.
‘ Mr. Kinnaird will disburse for them, and deduct
‘ from the amount on your application or that of Cap-
‘ tain Tyler.

‘ I see the good old King is gone to his place. One
‘ can’t help being sorry, though blindness, and age,
‘ and insanity, are supposed to be drawbacks on human
‘ felicity; but I am not at all sure that the latter, at
‘ least, might not render him happier than any of his
‘ subjects.

‘ I have no thoughts of coming to the coronation,
‘ though I should like to see it, and though I have a
‘ right to be a puppet in it; but my division with
‘ Lady Byron, which has drawn an equinoctial line

‘ between me and mine in all other things, will operate in this also to prevent my being in the same procession.

‘ By Saturday’s post I sent you four packets, containing Cantos Third and Fourth. Recollect that these two cantos reckon only as *one* with you and me, being in fact the third canto cut into two, because I found it too long. Remember this, and don’t imagine that there could be any other motive. The whole is about 225 stanzas, more or less, and a lyric of 96 lines, so that they are no longer than the first *single* cantos: but the truth is, that I made the first too long, and should have cut those down also had I thought better. Instead of saying in future for so many cantos, say so many stanzas or pages: it was Jacob Tonson’s way, and certainly the best; it prevents mistakes. I might have sent you a dozen cantos of 40 stanzas each,—those of “The Minstrel” (Beattie’s) are no longer,—and ruined you at once, if you don’t suffer as it is. But recollect that you are not *pinned down* to anything you say in a letter, and that, calculating even these two cantos as *one* only (which they were and are to be reckoned), you are not bound by your offer. Act as may seem fair to all parties.

‘ I have finished my translation of the First Canto of the “Morgante Maggiore” of Pulci, which I will transcribe and send. It is the parent, not only of Whistlecraft, but of all jocose Italian poetry. You must print it side by side with the original Italian, because I wish the reader to judge of the fidelity: it is stanza for stanza, and often line for line, if not word for word.

‘ You ask me for a volume of manners, &c. on Italy.

‘ Perhaps I am in the case to know more of them than
‘ most Englishmen, because I have lived among the
‘ natives, and in parts of the country where English-
‘ men never resided before (I speak of Romagna and
‘ this place particularly); but there are many reasons
‘ why I do not choose to treat in print on such a sub-
‘ ject. I have lived in their houses and in the heart
‘ of their families, sometimes merely as “amico di
‘ casa,” and sometimes as “amico di cuore” of the
‘ Dama, and in neither case do I feel myself authorized
‘ in making a book of them. Their moral is not your
‘ moral; their life is not your life; you would not
‘ understand it: it is not English, nor French, nor
‘ German, which you would all understand. The
‘ conventual education, the cavalier servitude, the
‘ habits of thought and living are so entirely different,
‘ and the difference becomes so much more striking
‘ the more you live intimately with them, that I know
‘ not how to make you comprehend a people who are
‘ at once temperate and profligate, serious in their
‘ characters and buffoons in their amusements, capable
‘ of impressions and passions, which are at once *sudden*
‘ and *durable* (what you find in no other nation), and
‘ who actually have no society (what we would call
‘ so), as you may see by their comedies; they have no
‘ real comedy, not even in Goldoni, and that is because
‘ they have no society to draw it from.

‘ Their conversazioni are not society at all. They
‘ go to the theatre to talk, and into company to hold
‘ their tongues. The *women* sit in a circle, and the
‘ men gather into groups, or they play at dreary faro,
‘ or “lotto reale,” for small sums. Their academie
‘ are concerts like our own, with better music and
‘ more form. Their best things are the carnival balls

‘ and masquerades, when everybody runs mad for six
‘ weeks. After their dinners and suppers they make
‘ extempore verses and buffoon one another; but it is
‘ in a humour which you would not enter into, ye of
‘ the north.

‘ In their houses it is better. I should know some-
‘ thing of the matter, having had a pretty general
‘ experience among their women, from the fisherman’s
‘ wife up to the Nobil Dama, whom I serve. Their
‘ system has its rules, and its fitnesses, and its deco-
‘ rums, so as to be reduced to a kind of discipline or
‘ game at hearts, which admits few deviations, unless
‘ you wish to lose it. They are extremely tenacious,
‘ and jealous as furies, not permitting their lovers even
‘ to marry if they can help it, and keeping them always
‘ close to them in public as in private, whenever they
‘ can. In short, they transfer marriage to adultery,
‘ and strike the *not* out of that commandment. The
‘ reason is, that they marry for their parents, and love
‘ for themselves. They exact fidelity from a lover as
‘ a debt of honour, while they pay the husband as a
‘ tradesman, that is, not at all. You hear a person’s
‘ character, male or female, canvassed not as depend-
‘ ing on their conduct to their husbands or wives, but
‘ to their mistress or lover. If I wrote a quarto, I
‘ don’t know that I could do more than amplify what
‘ I have here noted. It is to be observed that while
‘ they do all this, the greatest outward respect is to
‘ be paid to the husbands, not only by the ladies, but
‘ by their Serventi—particularly if the husband serves
‘ no one himself (which is not often the case, however);
‘ so that you would often suppose them relations—the
‘ Servente making the figure of one adopted into the
‘ family. Sometimes the ladies run a little restive and

‘ elope, or divide, or make a scene : but this is at
‘ starting, generally, when they know no better, or
‘ when they fall in love with a foreigner, or some such
‘ anomaly,—and is always reckoned unnecessary and
‘ extravagant.

‘ You inquire after Dante’s Prophecy : I have not
‘ done more than six hundred lines, but will vaticinate
‘ at leisure.

‘ Of the bust I know nothing. No cameos or seals
‘ are to be cut here or elsewhere that I know of, in
‘ any good style. Hobhouse should write himself to
‘ Thorwaldsen : the bust was made and paid for three
‘ years ago.

‘ Pray tell Mrs. Leigh to request Lady Byron to
‘ urge forward the transfer from the funds. I wrote
‘ to Lady Byron on business this post, addressed to the
‘ care of Mr. D. Kinnaird.’

LETTER 358.

TO MR. BANKES.

‘ *Ravenna, February 26th, 1820.*

‘ Pulci and I are waiting for you with impatience ;
‘ but I suppose we must give way to the attraction of
‘ the Bolognese galleries for a time. I know nothing
‘ of pictures myself, and care almost as little ; but to
‘ me there are none like the Venetian—above all,
‘ Giorgione. I remember well his Judgment of Solo-
‘ mon in the Mariscalchi in Bologna. The real mo-
‘ ther is beautiful, exquisitely beautiful. Buy her,
‘ by all means, if you can, and take her home with
‘ you : put her in safety ; for be assured there are
‘ troublous times brewing for Italy ; and as I never
‘ could keep out of a row in my life, it will be my fate,
‘ I dare say, to be over head and ears in it ; but no

‘ matter, these are the stronger reasons for coming to
‘ see me soon.

‘ I have more of Scott’s novels (for surely they are
‘ Scott’s) since we met, and am more and more de-
‘ lighted. I think that I even prefer them to his
‘ poetry, which (by the way) I redde for the first time
‘ in my life in your rooms in Trinity College.

‘ There are some curious commentaries on Dante
‘ preserved here, which you should see. Believe me
‘ ever, faithfully and most affectionately, yours, &c.’

LETTER 359.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Ravenna, March 1st, 1820.*

‘ I sent you by last post the translation of the
‘ First Canto of the Morgante Maggiore, and wish you
‘ to ask Rose about the word “sbergo,” i. e. “usbergo,”
‘ which I have translated *cuirass*. I suspect that it
‘ means *helmet* also. Now, if so, which of the senses
‘ is best accordant with the text? I have adopted
‘ *cuirass*, but will be amenable to reasons. Of the
‘ natives, some say one, and some t’ other; but they
‘ are no great Tuscans in Romagna. However, I will
‘ ask Sgricci (the famous improvisatore) to-morrow,
‘ who is a native of Arezzo. The Countess Guiccioli,
‘ who is reckoned a very cultivated young lady, and
‘ the dictionary, say *cuirass*. I have written *cuirass*,
‘ but *helmet* runs in my head nevertheless—and will
‘ run in verse very well, whilk is the principal point.
‘ I will ask the Sposa Spina Spinelli, too, the Floren-
‘ tine bride of Count Gabriel Rusponi, just imported
‘ from Florence, and get the sense out of somebody.

‘ I have just been visiting the new Cardinal, who
‘ arrived the day before yesterday in his legation. He
‘ seems a good old gentleman, pious and simple, and

‘ not quite like his predecessor, who was a bon-vivant,
‘ in the worldly sense of the words.

‘ Enclosed is a letter which I received some time
‘ ago from Dallas. It will explain itself. I have not
‘ answered it. This comes of doing people good. At
‘ one time or another (including copyrights) this per-
‘ son has had about fourteen hundred pounds of my
‘ money, and he writes what he calls a posthumous
‘ work about me, and a scrubby letter accusing me of
‘ treating him ill, when I never did any such thing.
‘ It is true that I left off letter-writing, as I have done
‘ with almost everybody else ; but I can’t see how that
‘ was misusing him.

‘ I look upon his epistle as the consequence of my
‘ not sending him another hundred pounds, which
‘ he wrote to me for about two years ago, and which I
‘ thought proper to withhold, he having had his share,
‘ methought, of what I could dispoise upon others.

‘ In your last you ask me after my articles of domes-
‘ tic wants ; I believe they are as usual : the bull-dogs,
‘ magnesia, soda-powders, tooth-powders, brushes, and
‘ everything of the kind which are here unattainable.
‘ You still ask me to return to England : alas ! to what
‘ purpose ? You do not know what you are requiring.
‘ Return I must, probably, some day or other (if I
‘ live), sooner or later ; but it will not be for pleasure,
‘ nor can it end in good. You inquire after my health
‘ and SPIRITS in large letters : my health can’t be very
‘ bad, for I cured myself of a sharp tertian ague, in
‘ three weeks, with cold water, which had held my
‘ stoutest gondolier for months, notwithstanding all the
‘ bark of the apothecary,—a circumstance which sur-
‘ prised Dr. Aglietti, who said it was a proof of great
‘ stamina, particularly in so epidemic a season. I did

‘ it out of dislike to the taste of bark (which I can’t
‘ bear), and succeeded, contrary to the prophecies of
‘ everybody, by simply taking nothing at all. As to
‘ *spirits*, they are unequal, now high, now low, like
‘ other people’s, I suppose, and depending upon cir-
‘ cumstances.

‘ Pray send me W. Scott’s new novels. What are
‘ their names and characters? I read some of his
‘ former ones, at least once a day, for an hour or so.
‘ The last are too hurried · he forgets Ravenswood’s
‘ name, and calls him *Edgar* and then *Norman*; and
‘ Girder, the cooper, is styled now *Gilbert*, and now
‘ *John*; and he don’t make enough of Montrose; but
‘ Dalgetty is excellent, and so is Lucy Ashton, and the
‘ b—h her mother. What is *Ivanhoe*? and what do
‘ you call his other? are there *two*? Pray make him
‘ write at least two a year: I like no reading so well.

‘ The editor of the Bologna Telegraph has sent me
‘ a paper with extracts from Mr. Mulock’s (his name
‘ always reminds me of Muley Moloch of Morocco)
‘ “Atheism answered,” in which there is a long eulo-
‘ gium of my poesy, and a great “compatimento” for
‘ my misery. I never could understand what they
‘ mean by accusing me of irreligion. However, they
‘ may have it their own way. This gentleman seems
‘ to be my great admirer, so I take what he says in
‘ good part, as he evidently intends kindness, to which
‘ I can’t accuse myself of being invincible. Yours, &c.’

LETTER 360.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Ravenna, March 5th, 1820.*

‘ In case, in your country, you should not readily
‘ lay hands on the *Morgante Maggiore*, I send you the
‘ original text of the *First Canto*, to correspond with

‘ the translation which I sent you a few days ago. It
 ‘ is from the Naples edition in quarto of 1732,—*dated*
 ‘ *Florence*, however, by a trick of *the trade*, which you,
 ‘ as one of the allied sovereigns of the profession, will
 ‘ perfectly understand without any further spiegazione.

‘ It is strange that here nobody understands the real
 ‘ precise meaning of “sbergo,” or “usbergo*,” an old
 ‘ Tuscan word, which I have rendered *cuirass* (but am
 ‘ not sure it is not *helmet*). I have asked at least
 ‘ twenty people, learned and ignorant, male and female,
 ‘ including poets, and officers civil and military. The
 ‘ dictionary says *cuirass*, but gives no authority; and a
 ‘ female friend of mine says *positively cuirass*, which
 ‘ makes me doubt the fact still more than before. Gin-
 ‘ guené says “bonnet de fer,” with the usual superficial
 ‘ decision of a Frenchman, so that I can’t believe him:
 ‘ and what between the dictionary, the Italian woman,
 ‘ and the Frenchman, there’s no trusting to a word
 ‘ they say. The context too, which should decide,
 ‘ admits equally of either meaning, as you will per-
 ‘ ceive. Ask Rose, Hobhouse, Merivale, and Foscolo,
 ‘ and vote with the majority. Is Frere a good Tus-
 ‘ can? if he be, bother him too. I have tried, you
 ‘ see, to be as accurate as I well could. This is my
 ‘ third or fourth letter, or packet, within the last
 ‘ twenty days.’

LETTER 361.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Ravenna, March 14th, 1820.*

‘ Enclosed is Dante’s Prophecy—Vision—or what
 ‘ not†. Where I have left more than one reading

* It has been suggested to me that usbergo is obviously the same as hauberk, habergeon, &c. all from the German *hals-berg*, or covering of the neck.

† There were in this Poem, originally, three [lines of remarkable

‘ (which I have done often), you may adopt that which
‘ Gifford, Frere, Rose, and Hobhouse, and others of
‘ your Utican Senate think the best, or least bad. The
‘ preface will explain all that is explicable. These are
‘ but the four first cantos: if approved, I will go on.

‘ Pray mind in printing; and let some good Italian
‘ scholar correct the Italian quotations.

‘ Four days ago I was overturned in an open carriage
‘ between the river and a steep bank :—wheels dashed
‘ to pieces, slight bruises, narrow escape, and all that;
‘ but no harm done, though coachman, footman, horses,
‘ and vehicle, were all mixed together like macaroni.
‘ It was owing to bad driving, as I say; but the coach-
‘ man swears to a start on the part of the horses. We
‘ went against a post on the verge of a steep bank, and
‘ capsized. I usually go out of the town in a carriage,
‘ and meet the saddle horses at the bridge; it was in
‘ going there that we boggled; but I got my ride, as
‘ usual, after the accident. They say here it was all
‘ owing to St. Antonio of Padua (serious, I assure you),—
‘ who does thirteen miracles a day,—that worse did not
‘ come of it. I have no objection to this being his
‘ fourteenth in the four-and-twenty-hours. He presides
‘ over overturns and all escapes therefrom, it seems;
‘ and they dedicate pictures, &c. to him, as the sailors
‘ once did to Neptune, after “the high Roman fashion.”

‘ Yours, in haste.’

strength and severity, which, as the Italian poet against whom they were directed was then living, were omitted in the publication. I shall here give them from memory.

‘ The prostitution of his Muse and wife,
‘ Both beautiful, and both by him debased,
‘ Shall salt his bread and give him means of life.’

LETTER 362.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Ravenna, March 20th, 1820.*

‘ Last post I sent you “ The Vision of Dante,”—
 ‘ four first Cantos. Enclosed you will find, *line for*
 ‘ *line*, in *third rhyme* (*terza rima*), of which your British
 ‘ blackguard reader as yet understands nothing, Fanny
 ‘ of Rimini. You know that she was born here, and
 ‘ married, and slain, from Cary, Boyd, and such
 ‘ people. I have done it into *cramp* English, line for
 ‘ line, and rhyme for rhyme, to try the possibility.
 ‘ You had best append it to the poems already sent
 ‘ by last three posts. I shall not allow you to play the
 ‘ tricks you did last year, with the prose you *post-*
 ‘ scribed to Mazeppa, which I sent to you *not* to be
 ‘ published, if not in a periodical paper,—and there
 ‘ you tacked it, without a word of explanation. If this
 ‘ is published, publish it *with the original*, and *together*
 ‘ with the *Pulci* translation, or the *Dante imitation*. I
 ‘ suppose you have both by now, and the *Juan* long
 ‘ before.

‘ FRANCESCA OF RIMINI.

‘ *Translation from the Inferno of Dante, Canto 5th.*

‘ “ The land where I was born sits by the seas,
 ‘ Upon that shore to which the Po descends,
 ‘ With all his followers, in search of peace.
 ‘ Love, which the gentle heart soon apprehends,
 ‘ Seized him for the fair person which was ta’en
 ‘ From me, and me even yet the mode offends.
 ‘ Love, who to none beloved to love again
 ‘ Remits, seized me with wish to please, so strong,
 ‘ That, as thou seest, yet, yet it doth remain.
 ‘ Love to one death conducted us along,
 ‘ But Caina waits for him our life who ended:”
 ‘ These were the accents utter’d by her tongue,—
 ‘ Since first I listen’d to these souls offended,
 ‘ I bow’d my visage and so kept it till—

‘ “ What think’st thou ? ” said the bard ; { *then* } I unbended,
 ‘ And recommenced : “ Alas ! unto such ill
 ‘ How many sweet thoughts, what strong ecstasies
 ‘ Led these their evil fortune to fulfil ! ”
 ‘ And then I turn’d unto their side my eyes,
 ‘ And said, “ Francesca, thy sad destinies
 ‘ Have made me sorrow till the tears arise.
 ‘ But tell me, in the season of sweet sighs,
 ‘ By what and how thy Love to Passion rose,
 ‘ So as his dim desires to recognise ? ”
 ‘ Then she to me : “ The greatest of all woes
 ‘ Is to { *recall to mind* } remind us of } our happy days
 ‘ In misery, and { *this* } { *that* } thy teacher knows.
 ‘ But if to learn our passion’s first root preys
 ‘ Upon thy spirit with such sympathy,
 ‘ I will { *relate* } { *do* even* } as he who weeps and says.——
 ‘ We read one day for pastime, seated nigh,
 ‘ Of Lancilot, how Love enchain’d him too.
 ‘ We were alone, quite unsuspectingly,
 ‘ But oft our eyes met, and our cheeks in hue
 ‘ All o’er discolour’d by that reading were ;
 ‘ But one point only wholly { *overthrew* } { *us o’erthrew ;* }
 ‘ When we read the { *desired* } { *long-sighed-for* } smile of her,
 ‘ To be thus kiss’d by such { *a fervent* } { *devoted* } lover,
 ‘ He who from me can be divided ne’er
 ‘ Kiss’d my mouth, trembling in the act all over.
 ‘ Accursed was the book and he who wrote !
 ‘ That day no further leaf we did uncover.——
 ‘ While thus one Spirit told us of their lot,
 ‘ The other wept, so that with pity’s thralls
 ‘ I swoon’d as if by death I had been smote,
 ‘ And fell down even as a dead body falls.”’

* ‘ In some of the editions, it is “ diro,” in others “ faro ; ”—an essential difference between “ saying ” and “ doing,” which I know not how to decide. Ask Foscolo. The d—d editions drive me mad.’

LETTER 363.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Ravenna, March 23d, 1820.*

‘ I have received your letter of the 7th. Besides
‘ the four packets you have already received, I have
‘ sent the Pulci a few days after, and since (a few days
‘ ago) the four first Cantos of Dante’s Prophecy (the
‘ best thing I ever wrote, if it be not *unintelligible*), and
‘ by last post a literal translation, word for word
‘ (versed like the original), of the episode of Francesca
‘ of Rimini. I want to hear what you think of the
‘ new Juans, and the translations, and the Vision.
‘ They are all things that are, or ought to be, very
‘ different from one another.

‘ If you choose to make a print from the Venetian,
‘ you may; but she don’t correspond at all to the
‘ character you mean her to represent. On the con-
‘ trary, the Contessa G. does (except that she is fair),
‘ and is much prettier than the Fornarina; but I have
‘ no picture of her except a miniature, which is very
‘ ill done; and, besides, it would not be proper, on
‘ any account whatever, to make such a use of it, even
‘ if you had a copy.

‘ Recollect that the *two* new Cantos only count with
‘ us for *one*. You may put the Pulci and Dante toge-
‘ ther: perhaps that were best. So you have put
‘ *your* name to Juan, after all your panic. You are a
‘ rare fellow. I must now put myself in a passion to
‘ continue my prose. ‘ Yours, &c.’

‘ I have caused write to Thorwaldsen. Pray be
‘ careful in sending my daughter’s picture—I mean,
‘ that it be not hurt in the carriage, for it is a journey
‘ rather long and jolting.’

LETTER 364.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ Ravenna, March 28th, 1820.

‘ Enclosed is a “Screed of Doctrine” for you,
‘ of which I will trouble you to acknowledge the
‘ receipt by next post. Mr. Hobhouse must have the
‘ correction of it for the press. You may show it first
‘ to whom you please.

‘ I wish to know what became of my two Epistles
‘ from St. Paul (translated from the Armenian three
‘ years ago and more), and of the letter to R—ts of
‘ last autumn, which you never have attended to?
‘ There are two packets with this.

‘ P.S. I have some thoughts of publishing the
‘ “Hints from Horace,” written ten years ago*,—if
‘ Hobhouse can rummage them out of my papers left
‘ at his father’s,—with some omissions and alterations
‘ previously to be made when I see the proofs.’

LETTER 365.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ Ravenna, March 29th, 1820.

‘ Herewith you will receive a note (enclosed) on
‘ Pope, which you will find tally with a part of the text
‘ of last post. I have at last lost all patience with the
‘ atrocious cant and nonsense about Pope, with which
‘ our present * *s are overflowing, and am determined
‘ to make such head against it as an individual can, by
‘ prose or verse; and I will at least do it with good-

* When making the observations which occur in the early part of this work, on the singular preference given by the noble author to the ‘Hints from Horace,’ I was not aware of the revival of this strange predilection, which (as it appears from the above letter, and, still more strongly, from some that follow) took place so many years after, in the full maturity of his powers and taste. Such a delusion is hardly conceivable, and can only, perhaps, be accounted for by that tenaciousness of early opinions and impressions by which his mind, in other respects so versatile, was characterized.

‘ will. There is no bearing it any longer ; and if it
‘ goes on, it will destroy what little good writing or
‘ taste remains amongst us. I hope there are still a
‘ few men of taste to second me ; but if not, I’ll battle
‘ it alone, convinced that it is in the best cause of
‘ English literature.

‘ I have sent you so many packets, verse and prose,
‘ lately, that you will be tired of the postage, if not of
‘ the perusal. I want to answer some parts of your
‘ last letter, but I have not time, for I must “boot and
‘ saddle,” as my Captain Craigengelt (an officer of the
‘ old Napoleon Italian army) is in waiting, and my
‘ groom and cattle to boot.

‘ You have given me a screed of metaphor and what
‘ not about *Pulci*, and manners, and “going without
‘ clothes, like our Saxon ancestors.” Now, the *Saxons*
‘ *did not go without clothes* ; and, in the next place,
‘ they are not my ancestors, nor yours either ; for
‘ mine were Norman, and yours, I take it by your
‘ name, were *Gael*. And, in the next, I differ from
‘ you about the “refinement” which has banished the
‘ comedies of Congreve. Are not the comedies of *She-*
‘ *ridan* acted to the thinnest houses ? I *know* (as *ex-*
‘ *committed*) that “The School for Scandal” was the
‘ *worst stock piece* upon record. I also know that
‘ Congreve gave up writing because Mrs. Centlivre’s
‘ balderdash drove his comedies off. So it is not de-
‘ cency, but stupidity, that does all this ; for Sheridan
‘ is as *decent* a writer as need be, and Congreve no
‘ worse than Mrs. Centlivre, of whom Wilks (the actor)
‘ said, “not only her play would be damned, but she
‘ too.” He alluded to “A Bold Stroke for a Wife.”
‘ But last, and most to the purpose, *Pulci* is *not* an
‘ *indecent* writer—at least in his first Canto, as you will
‘ have perceived by this time.

‘ You talk of *refinement* :—are you all *more* moral ?
‘ are you *so* moral ? No such thing. *I* know what the
‘ world is in England, by my own proper experience of
‘ the best of it—at least of the loftiest ; and I have de-
‘ scribed it every where as it is to be found in all places.

‘ But to return. I should like to see the *proofs* of
‘ mine answer, because there will be something to omit
‘ or to alter. But pray let it be carefully printed.
‘ When convenient let me have an answer. Yours.’

LETTER 366.

TO MR. HOPPNER.

‘ *Ravenna, March 31st, 1820.*

‘ Ravenna continues much the same as I described
‘ it. *Conversazioni* all Lent, and much better ones
‘ than any at Venice. There are small games at hazard,
‘ that is, *faro*, where nobody can point more than a
‘ shilling or two ;—other card-tables, and as much
‘ talk and coffee as you please. Everybody does and
‘ says what they please ; and I do not recollect any
‘ disagreeable events, except being three times falsely
‘ accused of flirtation, and once being robbed of six
‘ sixpences by a nobleman of the city, a Count * * *. I
‘ did not suspect the illustrious delinquent ; but the
‘ Countess V * * * and the Marquis L * * * told me of
‘ it directly, and also that it was a way he had, of filch-
‘ ing money when he saw it before him ; but I did not
‘ *ax* him for the cash, but contented myself with tell-
‘ ing him that if he did it again, I should anticipate
‘ the law.

‘ There is to be a theatre in April, and a fair, and
‘ an opera, and another opera in June, besides the fine
‘ weather of nature’s giving, and the rides in the Forest
‘ of Pine. With my best respects to Mrs. Hoppner,
‘ believe me ever, &c.

‘ BYRON.

‘ P.S. Could you give me an item of what books
 ‘ remain at Venice? I *don’t* want them, but want to
 ‘ know whether the few that are not here are there,
 ‘ and were not lost by the way. I hope and trust you
 ‘ have got all your wine safe, and that it is drinkable.
 ‘ Allegra is prettier, I think, but as obstinate as a mule,
 ‘ and as ravenous as a vulture: health good, to judge
 ‘ of the complexion—temper tolerable, but for vanity
 ‘ and pertinacity. She thinks herself handsome, and
 ‘ will do as she pleases.’

LETTER 367.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Ravenna, April 9th, 1820.*

‘ In the name of all the devils in the printing-
 ‘ office, why don’t you write to acknowledge the receipt
 ‘ of the second, third, and fourth packets, viz. the Pulci
 ‘ translation and original, the *Danticles*, the Observa-
 ‘ tions on, &c. ! You forget that you keep me in hot
 ‘ water till I know whether they are arrived, or if I
 ‘ must have the bore of recopying.

‘ Have you gotten the cream of translations, Fran-
 ‘ cesca of Rimini, from the Inferno? Why, I have
 ‘ sent you a warehouse of trash within the last month,
 ‘ and you have no sort of feeling about you: a pastry-
 ‘ cook would have had twice the gratitude, and thanked
 ‘ me at least for the quantity.

‘ To make the letter heavier, I enclose you the Car-
 ‘ dinal Legate’s (our Campeius) circular for his conver-
 ‘ sazione this evening. It is the anniversary of the
 ‘ Pope’s *tiara*-tion, and all polite Christians, even of
 ‘ the Lutheran creed, must go and be civil. And there
 ‘ will be a circle, and a faro-table (for shillings, that
 ‘ is, they don’t allow high play), and all the beauty,
 ‘ nobility, and sanctity of Ravenna present. The Car-

‘ dinal himself is a very good-natured little fellow,
 ‘ bishop of Muda, and legate here,—a decent believer
 ‘ in all the doctrines of the church. He has kept his
 ‘ housekeeper these forty years * * * *; but is
 ‘ reckoned a pious man, and a moral liver.

‘ I am not quite sure that I won’t be among you this
 ‘ autumn, for I find that business don’t go on—what
 ‘ with trustees and lawyers—as it should do, “with all
 ‘ deliberate speed.” They differ about investments in
 ‘ Ireland.

‘ Between the devil and deep sea,
 ‘ Between the lawyer and trustee,

‘ I am puzzled; and so much time is lost by my not
 ‘ being upon the spot, what with answers, demurs, re-
 ‘ joinders, that it may be I must come and look to it;
 ‘ for one says do, and t’ other don’t, so that I know not
 ‘ which way to turn: but perhaps they can manage
 ‘ without me. ‘ Yours, &c.

‘ P.S. I have begun a tragedy on the subject of
 ‘ Marino Faliero, the Doge of Venice; but you sha’n’t
 ‘ see it these six years, if you don’t acknowledge my
 ‘ packets with more quickness and precision. *Always*
 ‘ *write, if but a line*, by return of post, when anything
 ‘ arrives, which is not a mere letter.

‘ Address direct to Ravenna; it saves a week’s time,
 ‘ and much postage.’

LETTER 368.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Ravenna, April 16th, 1820.* ’

‘ Post after post arrives without bringing any
 ‘ acknowledgment from you of the different packets
 ‘ (excepting the first) which I sent within the last two
 ‘ months, all of which ought to be arrived long ere
 ‘ now; and as they were announced in other letters,

‘ you ought at least to say whether they are come or
‘ not. You are not expected to write frequent, or long
‘ letters, as your time is much occupied; but when
‘ parcels that have cost some pains in the composition,
‘ and great trouble in the copying, are sent to you, I
‘ should at least be put out of suspense, by the imme-
‘ diate acknowledgment, per return of post, addressed
‘ *directly* to *Ravenna*. I am naturally—knowing what
‘ continental *posts* are—anxious to hear that they are
‘ arrived; especially as I loathe the task of copying
‘ so much, that if there was a human being that could
‘ copy my blotted MSS., he should have all they can
‘ ever bring for his trouble. All I desire is two lines,
‘ to say, such a day I received such a packet. There
‘ are at least six unacknowledged. This is neither
‘ kind nor courteous.

‘ I have, besides, another reason for desiring you to
‘ be speedy, which is, that there is *THAT* brewing in
‘ Italy which will speedily cut off all security of com-
‘ munication, and set all your Anglo-travellers flying
‘ in every direction, with their usual fortitude in
‘ foreign tumults. The Spanish and French affairs
‘ have set the Italians in a ferment; and no wonder:
‘ they have been too long trampled on. This will
‘ make a sad scene for your exquisite traveller, but
‘ not for the resident, who naturally wishes a people
‘ to redress itself. I shall, if permitted by the natives,
‘ remain to see what will come of it, and perhaps to take
‘ a turn with them, like Dugald Dalgetty and his horse,
‘ in case of business; for I shall think it by far the most
‘ interesting spectacle and moment in existence, to see
‘ the Italians send the barbarians of all nations back to
‘ their own dens. I have lived long enough among
‘ them to feel more for them as a nation than for any

‘ other people in existence. But they want union, and
‘ they want principle; and I doubt their success.
‘ However, they will try, probably, and if they do, it
‘ will be a good cause. No Italian can hate an Aus-
‘ trian more than I do: unless it be the English, the
‘ Austrians seem to me the most obnoxious race under
‘ the sky.

‘ But I doubt, if anything be done, it won’t be so
‘ quietly as in Spain. To be sure, revolutions are not
‘ to be made with rose-water, where there are foreigners
‘ as masters.

‘ Write while you can; for it is but the toss up of
‘ a paul that there will not be a row that will some-
‘ what retard the mail by and by.

‘ Yours, &c.’

LETTER 369.

TO MR. HOPPNER.

Ravenna, April 18th, 1820.

‘ I have caused write to Siri and Willhalm to send
‘ with Vincenza, in a boat, the camp-beds and swords
‘ left in their care when I quitted Venice. There are
‘ also several pounds of *Manton’s best powder* in a Japan
‘ case; *but unless* I felt sure of getting it away from
‘ V. without seizure, I won’t have it ventured. I *can*
‘ *get* it *in* here, by means of an acquaintance in the
‘ customs, who has offered to get it ashore for me;
‘ but should like to be certiorated of its safety in leav-
‘ ing Venice. I would not lose it for its weight in
‘ gold—there is none such in Italy, as I take it to be.

‘ I wrote to you a week or so ago, and hope you
‘ are in good plight and spirits. Sir Humphry Davy
‘ is here, and was last night at the Cardinal’s. As I
‘ had been there last Sunday, and yesterday was warm,
‘ I did not go, which I should have done, if I had

‘ thought of meeting the man of chemistry. He called
 ‘ this morning, and I shall go in search of him at Corso
 ‘ time. I believe to-day, being Monday, there is no
 ‘ great conversazione, and only the family one at
 ‘ the Marchese Cavalli’s, where I go as a *relation*
 ‘ sometimes, so that, unless he stays a day or two, we
 ‘ should hardly meet in public.

‘ The theatre is to open in May for the fair, if there
 ‘ is not a row in all Italy by that time,—the Spanish
 ‘ business has set them all a constitutioning, and what
 ‘ will be the end, no one knows—it is also neces-
 ‘ sary thereunto to have a beginning.

‘ Yours, &c.

‘ P.S. My benediction to Mrs. Hoppner. How is
 ‘ your little boy? Allegra is growing, and has increased
 ‘ in good looks and obstinacy.’

LETTER 370.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Ravenna, April 23d, 1820.*

‘ The proofs don’t contain the *last* stanzas of
 ‘ Canto Second, but end abruptly with the 105th
 ‘ stanza.

‘ I told you long ago that the new Cantos* were
 ‘ *not* good, and I also *told you a reason*. Recollect, I
 ‘ do not oblige you to publish them; you may sup-
 ‘ press them, if you like, but I can alter nothing. I
 ‘ have erased the six stanzas about those two impostors,
 ‘ * * * * (which I suppose will give you
 ‘ great pleasure), but I can do no more. I can neither
 ‘ recast, nor replace; but I give you leave to put it all
 ‘ into the fire, if you like, or *not* to publish, and I
 ‘ think that’s sufficient.

* Of Don Juan.

‘ I told you that I wrote on with no good-will—that
‘ I had been, *not* frightened, but *hurt* by the outcry,
‘ and, besides, that when I wrote last November, I
‘ was ill in body, and in very great distress of mind
‘ about some private things of my own; but *you would*
‘ have it: so I sent it to you, and to make it lighter,
‘ *cut* it in two—but I can’t piece it together again. I
‘ can’t cobble: I must “either make a spoon or spoil
‘ a horn,”—and there’s an end; for there’s no remeid:
‘ but I leave you free will to suppress the whole, if
‘ you like it.

‘ About the *Morgante Maggiore*, *I won’t have a line*
‘ *omitted*. It may circulate, or it may not; but all the
‘ criticism on earth sha’n’t touch a line, unless it be
‘ because it is *badly* translated. Now you say, and I
‘ say, and others say, that the translation is a good
‘ one; and so it shall go to press as it is. Pulci must
‘ answer for his own irreligion: I answer for the trans-
‘ lation only.

‘ Pray let Mr. Hobhouse look to the *Italian* next
‘ time in the *proofs*: this time, while I am scribbling
‘ to you, they are corrected by one who passes for the
‘ prettiest woman in Romagna, and even the Marches,
‘ as far as Ancona, be the other who she may.

‘ I am glad you like my answer to your inquiries
‘ about Italian society. It is fit you should like *some-*
‘ *thing*, and be d—d to you.

‘ My love to Scott. I shall think higher of knight-
‘ hood ever after for his being dubbed. By the way,
‘ he is the first poet titled for his talent in Britain: it
‘ has happened abroad before now; but on the conti-
‘ nent titles are universal and worthless. Why don’t
‘ you send me *Ivanhoe* and the *Monastery*? I have
‘ never written to Sir Walter, for I know he has a

‘ thousand things, and I a thousand nothings, to do ;
 ‘ but I hope to see him at Abbotsford before very
 ‘ long, and I will sweat his claret for him, though
 ‘ Italian abstemiousness has made my brain but a
 ‘ shilpit concern for a Scotch sitting “inter pocula.”
 ‘ I love Scott, and Moore, and all the better brethren ;
 ‘ but I hate and abhor that puddle of water-worms
 ‘ whom you have taken into your troop.

‘ Yours, &c.

‘ P.S. You say that *one-half* is very good : you are
 ‘ *wrong* ; for, if it were, it would be the finest poem
 ‘ in existence. *Where* is the poetry of which *one-half*
 ‘ is good ? is it the *Æneid* ? is it *Milton’s* ? is it *Dry-*
 ‘ *den’s* ? is it any one’s except *Pope’s* and *Goldsmith’s*,
 ‘ of which *all* is good ? and yet these two last are the
 ‘ poets your pond poets would explode. But if *one-*
 ‘ *half* of the two new Cantos be good in your opinion,
 ‘ what the devil would you have more ? No—no ; no
 ‘ poetry is *generally* good—only by fits and starts—
 ‘ and you are lucky to get a sparkle here and there.
 ‘ You might as well want a midnight *all stars* as rhyme
 ‘ all perfect.

‘ We are on the verge of a *row* here. Last night
 ‘ they have overwritten all the city walls with “Up
 ‘ with the republic !” and “Death to the Pope !” &c.
 ‘ &c. This would be nothing in London, where the
 ‘ walls are privileged. But here it is a different
 ‘ thing : they are not used to such fierce political in-
 ‘ scriptions, and the police is all on the alert, and the
 ‘ Cardinal glares pale through all his purple.

‘ *April 24th, 1820, 8 o’clock, p. m.*

‘ The police have been, all noon and after, searching
 ‘ for the inscribers, but have caught none as yet. They
 ‘ must have been all night about it, for the “Live

‘ republics—Death to Popes and Priests,” are innu-
 ‘ merable, and plastered over all the palaces: ours has
 ‘ has plenty. There is “Down with the Nobility,”
 ‘ too; they are down enough already, for that matter.
 ‘ A very heavy rain and wind having come on, I did
 ‘ not go out and “skirr the country;” but I shall
 ‘ mount to-morrow, and take a canter among the pea-
 ‘ santry, who are a savage, resolute race, always
 ‘ riding with guns in their hands. I wonder they
 ‘ don’t suspect the serenaders, for they play on the
 ‘ guitar here all night, as in Spain, to their mistresses.

‘ Talking of politics, as Caleb Quotem says, pray
 ‘ look at the *conclusion* of my Ode on *Waterloo*, written
 ‘ in the year 1815, and, comparing it with the Duke
 ‘ de Berri’s catastrophe in 1820, tell me if I have not
 ‘ as good a right to the character of “*Vates*,” in both
 ‘ senses of the word, as Fitzgerald and Coleridge?

“Crimson tears will follow yet—”

‘ and have not they?

‘ I can’t pretend to foresee what will happen among
 ‘ you Englishers at this distance, but I vaticinate a
 ‘ row in Italy; in whilk case, I don’t know that I won’t
 ‘ have a finger in it. I dislike the Austrians, and
 ‘ think the Italians infamously oppressed; and if they
 ‘ begin, why, I will recommend “the erection of a
 ‘ sconce upon Drumsnab,” like Dugald Dalgetty.’

LETTER 371.

TO MR. MURRAY.

Ravenna, May 8th, 1820.

‘ From your not having written again, an inten-
 ‘ tion which your letter of the 7th ultimo indicated, I
 ‘ have to presume that the “Prophecy of Dante” has
 ‘ not been found more worthy than its predecessors in
 ‘ the eyes of your illustrious synod. In that case, you

‘ will be in some perplexity ; to end which, I repeat
‘ to you, that you are not to consider yourself as bound
‘ or pledged to publish anything because it is *mine*,
‘ but always to act according to your own views, or
‘ opinions, or those of your friends ; and to be sure
‘ that you will in no degree offend me by “ declining
‘ the article,” to use a technical phrase. The *prose*
‘ observations on John Wilson’s attack, I do not intend
‘ for publication at this time ; and I send a copy of
‘ verses to Mr. Kinnaird (they were written last year
‘ on crossing the Po) which must *not* be published
‘ either. I mention this, because it is probable he may
‘ give you a copy. Pray recollect this, as they are
‘ mere verses of society, and written upon private feel-
‘ ings and passions. And, moreover, I can’t consent
‘ to any mutilations or omissions of *Pulci*: the original
‘ has been ever free from such in Italy, the capital of
‘ Christianity, and the translation may be so in Eng-
‘ land ; though you will think it strange that they
‘ should have allowed such *freedom* for many centu-
‘ ries to the Morgante, while the other day they con-
‘ fiscated the whole translation of the fourth Canto of
‘ Childe Harold, and have persecuted Leoni, the trans-
‘ lator—so he writes me, and so I could have told him,
‘ had he consulted me before his publication. This
‘ shows how much more politics interest men in these
‘ parts than religion. Half a dozen invectives against
‘ tyranny confiscate Childe Harold in a month ; and
‘ eight and twenty cantos of quizzing monks and
‘ knights, and church government, are let loose for
‘ centuries. I copy Leoni’s account.

‘ “ Non ignorerà forse che la mia versione del
‘ 4° Canto del Childe Harold fu confiscata in ogni
‘ parte : ed io stesso ho dovuto soffrir vessazioni altret-

‘ tanto ridicole quanto illiberali, ad arte che alcuni
‘ versi fossero esclusi dalla censura. Ma siccome il
‘ divieto non fa d’ordinario che accrescere la curiosità
‘ così quel carne sull’ Italia è ricercato più che mai,
‘ e penso di farlo ristampare in Inghilterra senza nulla
‘ escludere. Sciagurata condizione di questa mia
‘ patria ! se patria si può chiamare una terra così
‘ avvilita dalla fortuna, dagli uomini, da se medesima.”

‘ Rose will translate this to you. Has he had his
‘ letter ? I enclosed it to you months ago.

‘ This intended piece of publication I shall dissuade
‘ him from, or he may chance to see the inside of
‘ St. Angelo’s. The last sentence of his letter is the
‘ common and pathetic sentiment of all his country-
‘ men.

‘ Sir Humphry Davy was here last fortnight, and I
‘ was in his company in the house of a very pretty
‘ Italian lady of rank, who, by way of displaying her
‘ learning in presence of the great chemist, then de-
‘ scribing his fourteenth ascension to Mount Vesuvius,
‘ asked “ if there was not a similar volcano in *Ireland* ? ”
‘ My only notion of an Irish volcano consisted of the
‘ lake of Killarney, which I naturally conceived her to
‘ mean ; but on second thoughts I divined that she
‘ alluded to *Iceland* and to *Hecla*—and so it proved,
‘ though she sustained her volcanic topography for
‘ some time with all the amiable pertinacity of “ the
‘ feminine.” She soon after turned to me and asked me
‘ various questions about Sir Humphry’s philosophy,
‘ and I explained as well as an oracle his skill in
‘ gasen safety lamps, and ungluing the Pompeian
‘ MSS. “ But what do you call him ? ” said she. “ A
‘ great chemist,” quoth I. “ What can he do ? ” re-
‘ peated the lady. “ Almost anything,” said I. “ Oh,

‘ then, mio caro, do pray beg him to give me some-
‘ thing to dye my eyebrows black. I have tried a
‘ thousand things, and the colours all come off; and
‘ besides, they don’t grow; can’t he invent something
‘ to make them grow?” All this with the greatest
‘ earnestness; and what you will be surprised at, she
‘ is neither ignorant nor a fool, but really well educated
‘ and clever. But they speak like children, when first
‘ out of their convents; and, after all, this is better
‘ than an English blue-stockings.

‘ I did not tell Sir Humphry of this last piece of
‘ philosophy, not knowing how he might take it.
‘ Davy was much taken with Ravenna, and the PRI-
‘ MITIVE *Italianism* of the people, who are unused to
‘ foreigners: but he only stayed a day.

‘ Send me Scott’s novels and some news.

‘ P.S. I have begun and advanced into the second
‘ act of a tragedy on the subject of the Doge’s con-
‘ spiracy (i. e. the story of Marino Faliero); but my
‘ present feeling is so little encouraging on such
‘ matters, that I begin to think I have mined my talent
‘ out, and proceed in no great phantasy of finding a
‘ new vein.

‘ P.S. I sometimes think (if the Italians don’t rise)
‘ of coming over to England in the autumn after the
‘ coronation (at which I would not appear, on account
‘ of my family schism), but as yet I can decide nothing.
‘ The place must be a great deal changed since I left
‘ it, now more than four years ago.’

LETTER 372.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ Ravenna, May 20th, 1820. .

‘ Murray, my dear, make my respects to Thomas
‘ Campbell, and tell him from me, with faith and

‘ friendship, three things that he must right in his
 ‘ poets: Firstly, he says Anstey’s Bath Guide charac-
 ‘ ters are taken from Smollett. ’Tis impossible:—the
 ‘ Guide was published in 1766, and Humphrey Clinker
 ‘ in 1771—*dunque*, ’tis Smollett who has taken from
 ‘ Anstey. Secondly, he does not know to whom
 ‘ Cowper alludes, when he says that there was one
 ‘ who “ built a church to *God*, and then blasphemed
 ‘ his name:” it was “ *Deo erexit Voltaire* ” to whom
 ‘ that maniacal Calvinist and coddled poet alludes.
 ‘ Thirdly, he misquotes and spoils a passage from
 ‘ Shakspeare, “ to gild refined gold, to paint the lily,”
 ‘ &c.; for *lily* he puts *rose*, and bedevils in more
 ‘ words than one the whole quotation.

‘ Now, Tom is a fine fellow; but he should be cor-
 ‘ rect: for the first is an *injustice* (to Anstey), the second
 ‘ an *ignorance*, and the third a *blunder*. Tell him all
 ‘ this, and let him take it in good part; for I might
 ‘ have rammed it into a review and rowed him—
 ‘ instead of which, I act like a Christian.

‘ Yours, &c.’

LETTER 373.

TO MR. MURRAY.

‘ *Ravenna, May 20th, 1820.*

‘ First and foremost, you must forward my letter
 ‘ to *Moore* dated 2d *January*, which I said you might
 ‘ open, but desired you *to forward*. Now, you should
 ‘ really not forget these little things, because they do
 ‘ mischief among friends. You are an excellent man,
 ‘ a great man, and live among great men, but do pray
 ‘ recollect your absent friends and authors.

‘ In the first place, *your packets*; then a letter from
 ‘ *Kinnaird*, on the most urgent business; another from
 ‘ *Moore*, about a communication to Lady Byron of

‘ importance; a fourth from the mother of Allegra;
 ‘ and fifthly, at Ravenna, the Countess G. is on the
 ‘ eve of being divorced. But the Italian public are on
 ‘ our side, particularly the women,—and the men also,
 ‘ because they say that *he* had no business to take the
 ‘ business up now after a year of toleration. All her
 ‘ relations (who are numerous, high in rank, and
 ‘ powerful) are furious *against him* for his conduct. I
 ‘ am warned to be on my guard, as he is very capable
 ‘ of employing *sicarii*—this is Latin as well as Italian,
 ‘ so you can understand it; but I have arms, and don’t
 ‘ mind them, thinking that I could pepper his raga-
 ‘ muffins, if they don’t come unawares, and that, if
 ‘ they do, one may as well end that way as another;
 ‘ and it would besides serve *you* as an advertise-
 ‘ ment:—

‘ Man may escape from rope or gun, &c.

‘ But he who takes woman, woman, woman, &c.

‘ Yours.

‘ P.S. I have looked over the press, but heaven
 ‘ knows how. Think what I have on hand and the
 ‘ post going out to-morrow. Do you remember the
 ‘ epitaph on Voltaire?

‘ Ci-git l’enfant gâté, &c.

‘ Here lies the spoilt child

‘ Of the world which he spoil’d.

‘ The original is in Grimm and Diderot, &c. &c. &c.’

LETTER 374.

TO MR. MOORE.

‘ Ravenna, May 24th, 1820.

‘ I wrote to you a few days ago. There is also a
 ‘ letter of January last for you at Murray’s, which will

‘ explain to you why I am here. Murray ought to
‘ have forwarded it long ago. I enclose you an epistle
‘ from a countrywoman of yours at Paris, which has
‘ moved my entrails. You will have the goodness,
‘ perhaps, to inquire into the truth of her story, and I
‘ will help her as far as I can,—though not in the
‘ useless way she proposes. Her letter is evidently
‘ unstudied, and so natural, that the orthography is also
‘ in a state of nature.

‘ Here is a poor creature, ill and solitary, who thinks,
‘ as a last resource, of translating you or me into
‘ French ! Was there ever such a notion ? It seems to
‘ me the consummation of despair. Pray inquire, and
‘ let me know, and, if you could draw a bill on me
‘ *here* for a few hundred francs, at your banker’s, I will
‘ duly honour it,—that is, if she is not an impostor*.
‘ If not, let me know, that I may get something
‘ remitted by my banker Longhi, of Bologna, for I
‘ have no correspondence myself at Paris : but tell her
‘ she must not translate;—if she does, it will be the
‘ height of ingratitude.

‘ I had a letter (not of the same kind, but in French
‘ and flattery) from a Madame Sophie Gail, of Paris,
‘ whom I take to be the spouse of a Gallo-Greek of
‘ that name. Who is she ? and what is she ? and how
‘ came she to take an interest in my *poeshie* or its
‘ author ? If you know her, tell her, with my com-

* According to his desire, I waited upon this young lady, having provided myself with a rouleau of fifteen or twenty Napoleons to present to her from his lordship; but, with a very creditable spirit, my young countrywoman declined the gift, saying that Lord Byron had mistaken the object of her application to him, which was to request that, by allowing her to have the sheets of some of his works before publication, he would enable her to prepare early translations for the French booksellers, and thus afford her the means of acquiring something towards a livelihood.

‘ pliments, that, as I only *read* French, I have not answered her letter ; but would have done so in Italian; if I had not thought it would look like an affectation. I have just been scolding my monkey for tearing the seal of her letter, and spoiling a mock book, in which I put rose leaves. I had a civet-cat the other day, too ; but it ran away, after scratching my monkey’s cheek, and I am in search of it still. It was the fiercest beast I ever saw, and like * * in the face and manner.

‘ I have a world of things to say ; but, as they are not come to a *dénouement*, I don’t care to begin their history till it is wound up. After you went, I had a fever, but got well again without bark. Sir Humphry Davy was here the other day, and liked Ravenna very much. He will tell you anything you may wish to know about the place and your humble servitor.

‘ Your apprehensions (arising from Scott’s) were unfounded. There are *no damages* in this country, but there will probably be a separation between them, as her family, which is a principal one by its connexions, are very much against *him*, for the whole of his conduct ;—and he is old and obstinate, and she is young and a woman determined to sacrifice every thing to her affections. I have given her the best advice, viz., to stay with him,—pointing out the state of a separated woman (for the priests won’t let lovers live openly together, unless the husband sanctions it), and making the most exquisite moral reflections,—but to no purpose. She says, “ I will stay with him, if he will let you remain with me. It is hard that I should be the only woman in Romagna who is not to have her Amico ; but, if not, I will not

‘ live with him; and as for the consequences, love,
‘ &c. &c. &c.”—you know how females reason on such
‘ occasions.

‘ He says he has let it go on till he can do so no
‘ longer. But he wants her to stay, and dismiss me;
‘ for he doesn’t like to pay back her dowry and to make
‘ an alimony. Her relations are rather for the separa-
‘ tion, as they detest him,—indeed, so does everybody.
‘ The populace and the women are, as usual, all for
‘ those who are in the wrong, viz., the lady and her
‘ lover. I should have retreated, but honour, and an
‘ erysipelas which has attacked her, prevent me,—to
‘ say nothing of love, for I love her most entirely,
‘ though not enough to persuade her to sacrifice every-
‘ thing to a frenzy. “ I see how it will end; she will
‘ be the sixteenth Mrs. Shuffleton.”

‘ My paper is finished, and so must this letter.

‘ Yours ever, ‘ B.

‘ P.S. I regret that you have not completed the
‘ Italian Fudges. Pray, how come you to be still in
‘ Paris? Murray has four or five things of mine in
‘ hand—the new Don Juan, which his back-shop
‘ synod don’t admire;—a translation of the first Canto
‘ of Pulci’s Morgante Maggiore, excellent;—a short
‘ ditto from Dante, not so much approved;—the Pro-
‘ phecy of Dante, very grand and worthy, &c. &c. &c.;
‘ —a furious prose answer to Blackwood’s Observa-
‘ tions on Don Juan, with a savage Defence of Pope—
‘ likely to make a row. The opinions above I quote
‘ from Murray and his Utican senate;—you will form
‘ your own, when you see the things.

‘ You will have no great chance of seeing me, for
‘ I begin to think I must finish in Italy. But, if you

‘ come my way, you shall have a tureen of macaroni.
‘ Pray tell me about yourself and your intents.

‘ My trustees are going to lend Earl Blessington
‘ sixty thousand pounds (at six per cent.) on a Dublin
‘ mortgage. Only think of my becoming an Irish
‘ absentee!’

END OF VOLUME THE SECOND.

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